"Terrible" Fred Wittrock: Train Robber

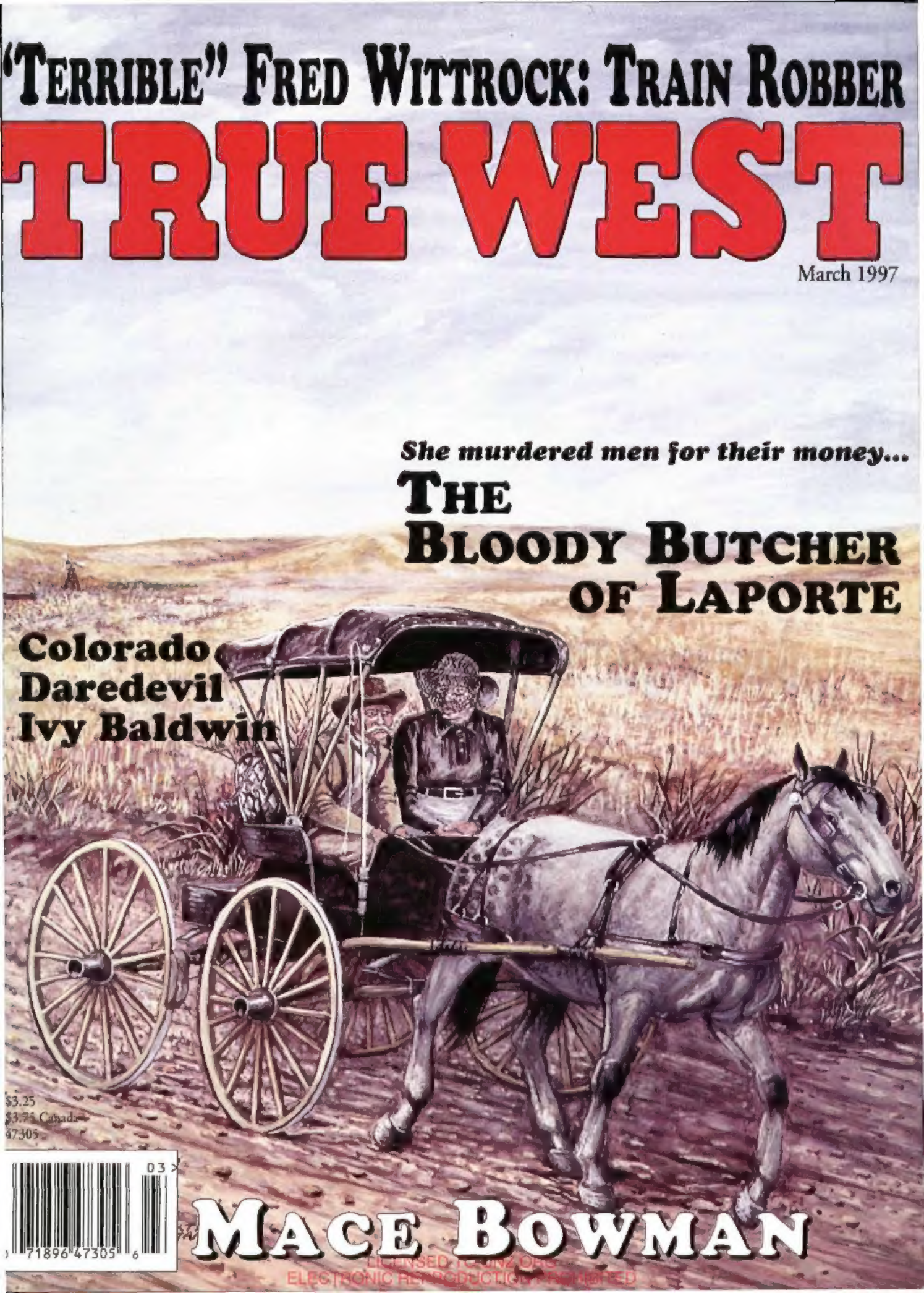
TRUE WEST

March 1997

She murdered men for their money...

The Bloody Butcher of Laporte

Colorado Daredevil Ivy Baldwin



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Sinister Cinema

PRESENTS

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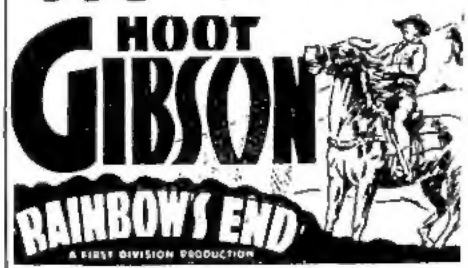
Sinister Six-Gun's 35mm Collection

All titles on this page were converted to 3/4" video master from original 35mm theatrical prints — many of them for the first time. You've simply never seen these films on video before until you've seen our copies!

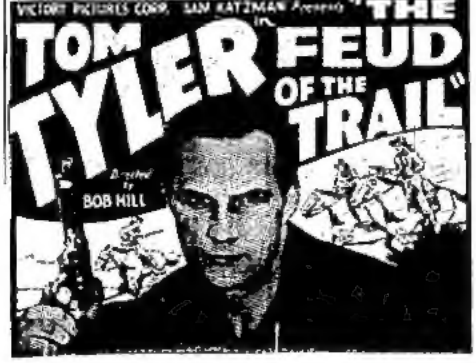


ROLL ON TEXAS MOON (1946, Republic) Roy Rogers, Dale Evan, Gabby Hayes, Bob Nolan, Dennis Hoey ,Kenne Duncan, UNCUT! This was the first of 27 Rogers films directed by serial veteran William Witney, who brought to them more action and livelier pacing in favor of songs and gaudy costumes. Plot concerns a bloody dispute between cattlemen and sheepherders. It's up to Roy and the boys to prevent an all-out range war. In this polished, highly entertaining Republic production. One great scene has Evans driving down a narrow canyon. Suddenly, her car goes out of control, shoots over the edge, and crashes into a raging river below! 35mm. W281

RAINBOW'S END (1935, First Division) Hoot Gibson, June Gale, Buddy Roosevelt, Warner Richmond, John Elliott. This is without a doubt one of Hoot's finest westerns. He finds himself in the awkward position of helping out a rancher at odds with Hoot's own father. The real problem it turns out is daddy's crooked partner who's out to undermine the rancher and scarf up his property. Good script, good cast, good acting--this is a marvelous blend of B western action and Gibson's engaging country humor. Recommended. 35mm. W113

BULLDOG COURAGE (1935, Puritan) Tim McCoy, Joan Woodbury, Paul Fix, Eddie Buzzard. This very interesting McCoy film has Tim playing a phantom outlaw who steals gold shipments from stagecoaches in retaliation for having lost his gold mine to an unscrupulous banker on a legal technicality. He is tracked down and fatally wounded by a posse. Years later, his son (also played by Tim) comes back to tangle with the crooked banker. Most of Tim's films for Puritan were pretty good, and this one is no exception. 35mm. W111

FEUD OF THE TRAIL (1937, Victory) Tom Tyler, Harlene Wood, Dick Alexander. After rescuing a man robbed by outlaws, Tom finds out some startling news: It seems the leader of the gang is a dead ringer for him! Tom sets out to track the bandit down. There's a gunfight; the gang leader is killed. Tom then takes the dead bandit's place and rides out to capture the rest of his own gang. 35mm. W258



THE GUN RANGER (1936, Supreme/Republic) Bob Steele, Eleanor Stewart, John Merton, Ernie Adams, Earl Dwire, Budd Buster, Wally Wales. Bob plays a lawdog who, along with the rest of the town, awaits a verdict on a local badman being tried for murder. The whole town is shocked when the killer is freed on a technicality which was set up by the killer's lawyer and a crooked district attorney. Bob resigns from the Rangers in disgust and promises to act as judge, jury, and executioner as he rids the town of the low-lifes. Another well made A.W. Hackel production made for Republic. From 35mm. W264

THE LIGHT OF WESTERN STARS (1940, Paramount) Russell Hayden, Victor Jory, Jo Ann Sayers, Noah Beery, Jr., Tom Tyler, Eddie Dean, Alan Ladd. A big-name cast is featured in this quality Paramount western thriller. Jory plays a hard-drinking, reckless cowboy who finds himself at odds with a crooked sheriff and a notorious gun runner to Mexico. A nice array of western characters compliments the action-laden proceedings. From 35mm. W274

STORMY TRAILS (1936, Colony) Rex Bell, Bob Hodges, Lois Wilde, Lane Chandler, Earl Dwire, Karl Hackett. Rex gets into a gunfight during a bank robbery and shoots one of the thieves in self-defense. However, the dead bandit is one of Rex's ex-ranch hands who was suing him. Rex is arrested on suspicion of murder. Rustlers, robberies, jailbreaks, stampedes, etc., are all part of this enjoyable B western thriller. From a beautiful 35mm print. W263

THE FIGHTING PARSON (1933, Allied) Hoot Gibson, Marceline Day, Skeeter Bill Robbins, Charlie King. Hoot and Skeeter are cowpokes on the lam after being caught playing craps with loaded dice. Hoot finds the clothes and identification papers of a parson on the desert floor and decides to assume the holy man's identity. He hits town right before a hanging, but convinces the townspeople to be forgiving and let the outlaw go. Hoot will be responsible for him. The truth of the matter is that the outlaw knows Hoot's real identity and threatens to blow his cover unless he steps in and saves him. A very amusing Gibson film. The scene where Charlie King forces the real parson to disrobe at gunpoint is pretty hilarious. 35mm. W253

THE COWBOY COUNSELOR (1932, Allied) Hoot Gibson, Sheila Mannors, Skeeter Bill Robbins, Bobby Nelson, Fred Gilman, Jack Rutherford. Another superior Gibson action-comedy. Hoot plays a con-man posing as a frontier lawyer who goes around town selling a bogus law book. Things get serious though when he agrees to defend a young man falsely accused of a stagecoach robbery. The courtroom scenes that follow are quite amusing. Hoot's only able to establish reasonable doubt in the jury's mind after he dons the scarf of the real bandit and commits another robbery. There's just one problem: The stagecoach he robs just happens to be the one the trial judge is riding on. Uh-oh! Cute, clever, and funny. Recommended. 35mm. W260

SUNSET SERENADE (1942, Republic) Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Helen Parrish, Onslow Stevens, Joan Woodbury. UNCUT! A tiny infant boy inherits a huge ranch. Stevens and Woodbury are shifty characters trying get their slimy hands on the property. Roy faces grave danger trying to protect the baby boy's right of property. One terrific scene has Roy rescuing a wounded man in a narrow canyon when a nearby dam is suddenly dynamited! A monstrous wall of water comes rushing down on top of them. From 35mm. W276

THE IDAHO KID (1936, Colony) Rex Bell, Dave Sharpe, Marion Shilling, Lane Chandler, Charlie King, Lafe McKee, Earl Dwire. Rex plays a roaming cowboy who wanders back to his home town after many years, having run away at an early age. He is not recognized by either his natural father or his stepfather, both of whom have a feud against each other. Can he keep his two "parents" from killing each other? It's not going to be easy. From 35mm. W265

THUNDER OVER TEXAS (1934, Beacon) Guinn "Big Boy" Williams, Marion Shilling, Helen Westcott, Claude Payton. A man is brutally murdered in a struggle over some valuable railroad maps which contain prized information about the proposed location of a new railroad line. The killers will do anything to obtain them, including threatening the life of the murdered man's young daughter. Guinn sets out to protect her and track the killers down. From 35mm. W264

...IN THE PICTURE WORTHY OF THE TRIUMPH YOU'VE MADE FOR HIM!
ROY ROGERS
SUNSET SERENADE
GEORGE Gabby HAYES
HELEN PARRISH ONSLOW STEVENS
JOAN WOODBURY FRANK M. THOMAS
A REPUBLIC PICTURE
with BOB NOLAN and THE SONS OF THE PIONEERS

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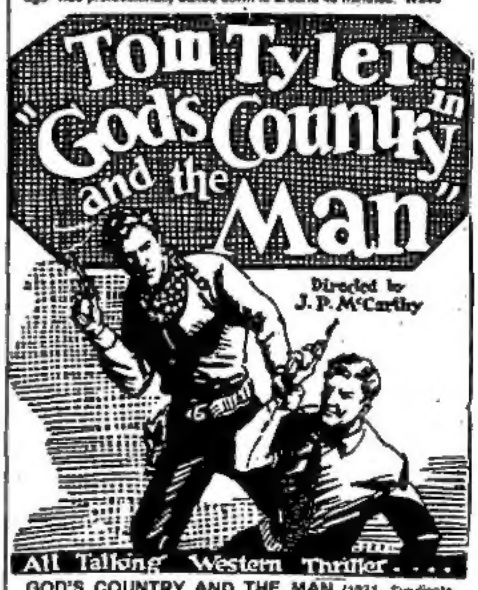
MORE SINISTER SIX-GUN TITLES

BEYOND THE LAW (1930, Syndicate) Lane Chandler, Robert Frazer, Charlie King, Louise Lorraine. A border saloon—hall in Nevada, hall in California—is a hangout for a nasty gang of frontier gangsters. Chandler and Frazer get mixed up in things when the gang's leader literally falls into their laps. Very rare. 16mm. W242

CANYON HAWKS (1930, Big 4) Yakima Canutt, Wally Wales, Buzz Barton, Rene Borden. *First time on video!* This is the closest that Yak ever came to playing a lead, hero role in a talkie B western. Yak comes to the aid of some embattled sheepherders. Long thought to be lost, our master was taken from a rare 16mm print, which--years ago--was professionally edited down to around 40 minutes. W243



GOD'S COUNTRY AND THE MAN (1931, Syndicate, aka TRAIL OF THE LAW) Tom Tyler, Gabby Hayes, Betty Mack, Al Bridge. Next to BORN TO BATTLE, this is the best Tyler western we've seen to date. Tom is a tough special agent sent to a lonely border town to bring in Livermore, one of the most ruthless criminals in the region. Livermore--a really bad dude--plays a death waltz on the violin to his victims before slaying them. Gabby is great as Tom's outlaw pal. Will they come back alive? Not the kind of ending you'd expect. Much better-than-usual cinematography (almost Germanic in places) with many striking interior shots of Livermore's crude, yet lavish saloon. No relation to the '37 Tom Keene film. 16mm. W244

CALL OF THE ROCKIES (1931, Syndicate) Ben Lyon, Maria Prevost, Russell Simpson, Anders Randolph. *First time on video!* A trio of nomadic outlaws join a wagon train passing over the Rockies. They scheme with a band of Indians to attack and plunder the settlers in this incredibly rare western thriller. From 16mm. W245

KEN MAYNARD in "WHISTLIN' DAN"

WHISTLIN' DAN (1932, Tiffany) Ken Maynard, Joyzelle Joyner, Georges Renevant, Don Terry. A great B western. A powerful desperado named Karloff holds Ken's saddle-pal for ransom. Ken's got until sundown to deliver $5000 or his buddy will be executed! Ken doesn't make it in time (the execution scene is an eye-opener). Ken swears to track down and kill the murderous renegade in what is probably Ken's best western for Tiffany studios. From 16mm. W246

THE TEXAN (1932, Principal Attraction) Buffalo Bill, Jr., Lucile Browne, Jack Mower, Bobby Nelson, Yakima Canutt. Compared to his later work for Superior Pictures, this early Buffalo Bill, Jr. western isn't all that bad. The plot has Bill being wanted by the law and becoming involved with a crooked horse race scheme. 16mm. W247

MYSTERY RANCH (1932, Reliable) George O'Brien, Cecilia Parker, Charles Middleton, Roy Stewart, Noble Johnson. A horror western if there ever was one, gothic and Germanic in a way not ever approached by any other B western. Middleton is unforgettable as a maniacal ranch baron who considers himself the self-appointed lord of his region. O'Brien is in top form as the special agent sent in to stop his nefarious schemes (none of George's predecessors have ever come back). Johnson is excellent as Mudo, Middleton's monstrous, murdering henchman. Dark, creepy, and intense. Any fan of '30s horror will be impressed. One helluva western, too. 16mm. W248

GOLD (1932, Majestic) Jack Hoxie, Alice Day, Hooper Atchley, Tom London, Lafe McKee. Jack sells his gold mine to an old-timer, then blows his money partying. When the old-timer is found murdered and his money stolen, Jack becomes the prime suspect. 16mm. W249

WAR OF THE RANGE (1933, Freuler/Monarch) Tom Tyler, Lane Chandler, Caryl Lincoln. FIRST TIME ON VIDEO! Here's one that hasn't been around since the earliest days of TV. Tom plays a cowpuncher who tries to avert a range war between his stubborn father and a shifty rancher. Tom's told to hit the road by Dad though, when he defends a nester family settling on their land. 16mm. W252

SINGING SIX GUNS THAT SANG A SONG OF DEATH FOR THE GANG THAT WAS OUT TO FRAME HIM
Ken MAYNARD
AND THE WONDER HORSE "TARZAN"
IN "THE LONE AVENGER"
A WORLD WIDE PICTURE

THE LONE AVENGER (1933, World Wide) Ken Maynard, Muriel Gordon, Charlie King, Al Bridge. Ken's dad, a prominent banker, is found dead, supposedly from suicide. Ken thinks otherwise and sets out to prove it. The final showdown scene is excellent as the antagonists wait inside a saloon on a dark, very dark, rainy night. The nail-biting suspense that builds is quite effective and most unusual for your average B western. A nice effort. Recommended. 16mm. W251

COWBOY MILLIONAIRE (1935, Atherton/Fox) George O'Brien, Evelyn Bostock, Edgar Kennedy, Alden Chase. George is a dude ranch cowboy who falls for a classy British broad. A scheme to take his gold mine away eventually lands him in England where he confronts the bad guy and wins the hand of his lady fair. 16mm. W255

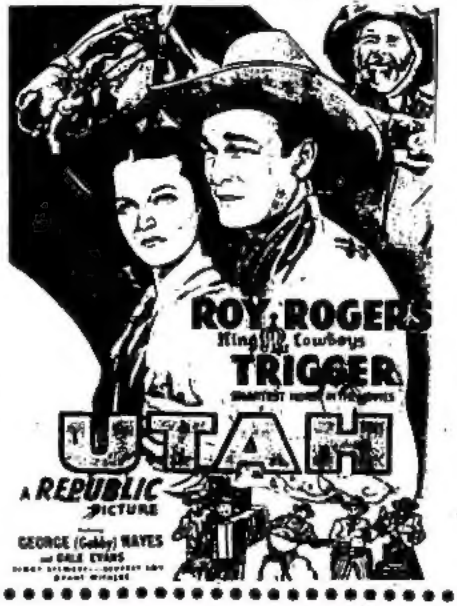
HIS FIGHTING BLOOD (1935, Ambassador) Kermit Maynard, Polly Ann Young, Paul Fix, Ted Adams. Kermit's films for Ambassador were some of the best B westerns of the mid-thirties. In this entertaining action piece, Kermit finds his brother falling in with thieves. They eventually order him to kill Kermit! From 16mm. W256

OUTLAW RULE (1935, Kent) Reb Russell, Yakima Canutt, Betty Mack, Jack Rockwell, John McGuire. A rancher, frustrated by cattle rustling and apathetic law enforcement, shoots the local sheriff dead. Or does he? Reb tries to sort things out. From 16mm. W257

BIG BOY RIDES AGAIN (1935, Beacon) Guinn Williams, Connie Bergen. Guinn's the heir to the estate of his dad, who was shot by a masked killer. Who did it? An "old dark ranch" forgotten horrors style thriller, complete with leering chinamen, masked figures peering through windows, secret trapdoors, hidden cellars, etc. 16mm. W241

THUNDERBOLT (1935, Regal) Kane Richmond, Bobby Nelson, Lafe McKee. In a small western town, a pair of crooked deputies steal a gold shipment and murder a young boy's father. Kane gets the blame, but the boy and his dog set out to track the real killer down. Very rare and probably first time on video. 16mm. W258

BRANDED A COWARD (1935, Supreme) Johnny Mack Brown, Billie Seward, Syd Saylor. As a boy, Johnny witnesses the massacre of his entire family by outlaws, but he does nothing even though he holds a gun in his hand. 20 years later he is known as a coward until an outlaw called, "The Cat" comes to town. 16mm. W259



HAIR TRIGGER CASEY (1935, Atlantic) Jack Perrin, Betty Mack. Jack's a cowboy cop that comes home to his ranch to find himself up against a Chinese smuggling racket. A nice blend of yellow peril and western themes. From a knockout 16mm print. W260

THE TRAITOR (1935, Puritan) Tim McCoy, Wally Wales, Frances Grant. Tim's a hard-nosed Texas Ranger. His captain fires him for cowardice! It's all a put-on, though, as Tim tracks down a western crime boss known as "Big George." Good fun. 16mm. W261

BLAZING JUSTICE (1936, Spectrum) Bill Cody, Gertrude Messinger, Gordon Griffith. *Bill* a cowhand who captures a couple of rustlers. There's a reward, too--$5000! He starts out on vacation but runs into trouble & ends up getting accused of murder! 16mm. W262

WILD HORSE RODEO (1937, Republic) Bob Livingston, Ray Corrigan, Max Terhune. A superior 3 Mesquiteers epic. Stoney's a hot rider on the rodeo circuit. He returns home to track down a legendary wild horse known as "Cyclone." Stoney wants him for the rodeo; Tucson says no. Stunning Lone Pine locations. 16mm. W267

THE LAW COMMANDS (1937, Crescent) Tom Keene, Lorraine Hayes, Bud Buster, John Merton. Night riders are killing and terrorizing homesteaders all over the region. Tom's a doctor who tries to keep the homesteaders from taking the law into their own hands. Soon after though, another settler is killed, further enraging Tom and the townfolk. Tom soon gets a star pinned on his shirt. 16mm. W268

RIDIN' THE LONE TRAIL (1937, Supreme/Republic) Bob Steele, Claire Rochelle, Charlie King, Ernie Adams. Stagecoaches are being robbed by a gang of thieves headed by a mysterious hooded killer who rides a great white horse known as "White Peril." Lawman Bob is brought in to investigate. He discovers the horse belongs to the girl he has a crush on. Who's really guilty? A terrific climax features Bob and the killer duking it out on an electric hand-car. Suddenly the sound of an on-coming train is heard! 16mm. W269

PANAMINT'S BAD MEN (1938, Principal) Smith Ballew, Evelyn Daw, Noah Beery, Sr. A slick Ballew western. This time he's a marshal out to round up a gang of badass bank robbers. The leader's a corrupt saloon owner played to the hilt by Beery. From 16mm. W271

WHERE THE WEST BEGINS (1938, Monogram) Jack Randall, Luana Walters, Fuzzy Knight, Budd Buster. Jack plays a ranch foreman for a young girl who doesn't really care much about her ranch (she wants to become a New York actress). Her apathy is soon the target of rustlers and a shifty land speculator. From 16mm. W270

WESTBOUND STAGE (1939, Monogram) Tex Ritter, Nelson McDowell, Muriel Evans, Nolan Willis. A wagon train crossing the plains comes across the remains of three other wagon trains that have been sacked by looters. They, too, are soon attacked. 16mm. W272

GUN CODE (1940, PRC) Tim McCoy, Ina Guest, Lou Fulton, Alden Chase, Ted Adams. A gang of extortionists are squeezing blood money out of a small town in return for "protection." When a local citizen threatens to expose the gang's leader, he is murdered. The victim is Tim's dad! All hell soon breaks loose. 16mm. W273

LONE STAR LAWMEN (1941, Monogram) Tom Keene, Sugar Dawn, Betty Miles, Frank Yaconelli. Outlaws are out of control! Another border town needs cleaning up, and Tom's just the man to do it. Yaconelli has a hilarious scene with an accordion. 16mm. W276

THE SOMBRERO KID (1942, Republic) Don "Red" Barry, Lynn Merrick, Robert Homans. Don's adopted father, a U.S. Marshal, is murdered by a high-handed town boss. Don poses as an outlaw to infiltrate the gang and bring the killer to justice. 16mm. W277

TRAIL RIDERS (1942, Monogram) John King, Dave Sharpe, Max Terhune, Evelyn Finley, Charlie King. The sheriff of Gila Springs is gunned down by outlaws, leaving the town wide open to corruption. The Range Busters ride in to clean things up. From 16mm. W278

THE DRIFTER (1944, PRC) Buster Crabbe, Al St. John, Carol Parker, Kermit Maynard. Buster is good in a rare "good guy-bad guy" dual role. The good guy is a Robin Hood type riding the range and helping others. The bad guy is a notorious bank robber who cashes in on the good guy's reputation. A better-than-usual PRC. 16mm. W279

UTAH (1945, Republic) Roy Rogers, Dale Evans, Gabby Hayes, Grant Withers. UNCUT! Considered one of Roy's finest films. Dale plays a city gal who comes home to the family ranch with the intention of selling it. Roy and Gabby do their best to dissuade her. Withers is the villain out to snatch up the property. A nice mix of action, comedy, and songs. Even if you're not big on songs you'll be captivated by some truly fine tunes by the Sons of the Pioneers. Slick. 16mm. W280

DEADLINE (1948, Yucca) Sunset Carson, Pat Starling, Lee Roberts, Stephen Keyes. A Pony Express rider uncovers some mysterious goings-on during the construction of a telegraph line. A murder is committed! Sunset gets the blame. From 16mm. W282

BORDER OUTLAWS (1950, Eagle Lion) Spade Cooley, Maria Hart, Bill Edwards. Spade's a dude ranch manager in this rare western about a mysterious masked outlaw known as "The Phantom Horseman." There's a $1000 reward on his head. 16mm. W283

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TRUE WEST

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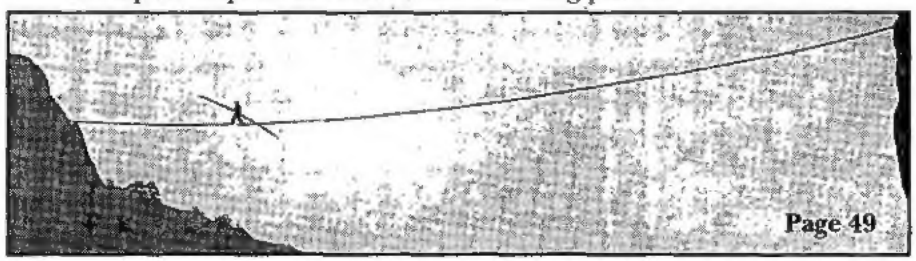

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Murderess Belle Gunnes and a suitor.
By Al Martin Napoletano

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FROM THE EDITOR

Howdy, ya'll!

Sometimes it amazes me that the American West is still a fascination. In a society that can jump on the computer and tappity tap their way into the archives of every museum in the world, dial-up any movie they want from satellite systems, and open their window shades with the push of a button, I'm glad that the good old cowboy can still lasso folks imaginations.

I lived in Japan for a spell and during that time I fielded a lot of questions about America from the interested Japanese with whom I lived and worked. But most often, it was the West they wanted to know about. The "Gunbattle at the OK Ranch" was a favorite topic of conversation, followed closely by how it was only logical that I was chased to school by Indians as a child, growing up in Oklahoma and all. I didn't have the heart to tell them that the only time I had been chased by an Indian was on the playground during touch football games.

I answered their questions the best I could and tried to turn the conversation to technology or Japanese history but always returned to the Alamo or Dodge City.

Upon my return home from overseas, I went to visit my grandpa in New Mexico for a month of fishing and listening to baseball games on the radio. On the way to his cabin in the mountains, Grandpa decided to stop in Lincoln, New Mexico, so we could stretch our legs and get a bite to eat. We wandered the same dusty street that Billy the Kid had in the 1880s and stopped to read all the markers and plaques. I ducked into the old Tunstall store and was admiring a display case filled with guns used by participants of the Lincoln County War when Billy the Kid himself nudged in next to me and stared wide-eyed at the weapons.

Actually it wasn't really Billy, but a young boy decked from head to toe in cowboy garb: red hat, plastic vest, six-guns loaded with rolls of ear shattering caps, and small brown boots. This little outlaw was ready to clomp down Lincoln's boarded walks at a moment's notice.

I smiled politely at the boy's parents as they eyed their watches and reminded him they needed to get back on the road to Santa Fe or some such place. But their words fell on deaf ears. The youngster was lost in the same world as my friends back in Japan, a world of high adventure and history.

I followed the boy and his parents through all the shops and museums in Lincoln until we collectively arrived at the focal point of town, a large, two-story building known as the "Big Store," or Lincoln County Courthouse, where Billy the Kid made his famous last escape from the grasp of the law. I had been to the building many times and paid less attention to the displays and more to the little boy who was still lost somewhere in 1881 as he roamed the building, looking at evidence of a drama he probably didn't yet understand.

The parents winced at the time and told their son that it was time to go. He was standing transfixed in front of a life-size photo of Billy the Kid and wouldn't budge. As the parents issued their final warning and walked outside, the youngster pulled one of his pistols from its holster and let loose with a barrage of cap fire at the life-size Billy. Billy stared back with his lazy eyes and buck-toothed smirk as the little boy clomped off to his destiny with the art galleries and gift shops of Santa Fe. He had faced down an outlaw. You can't buy that and hang it on your wall.

Wherever that kid is right now, I know that if he dials up a movie, goes to the library, or searches the Internet, chances are he's looking for something western. I hope he finds it.

Marcus Huff

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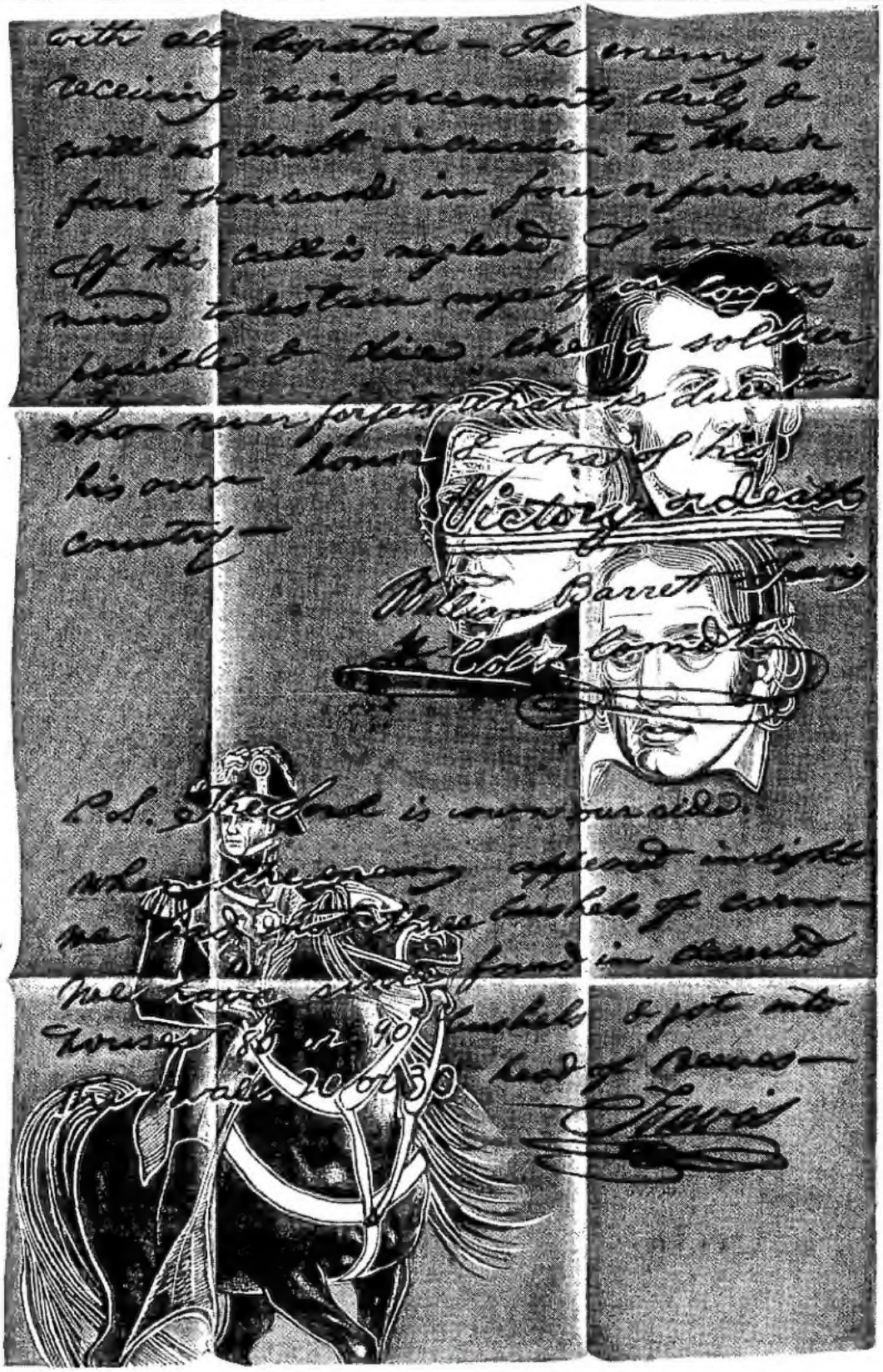
A LETTER FROM THE ALAMO

BY WILLIAM HENDERSON

On the evening of February 24, 1836, Colonel William B. Travis, beseiged and facing certain death at the hands of General Lopez de Santa Anna, sends a plea for help from the Alamo. Addressed "To the people of Texas and all Americans in the world," the message arrives too late. Travis and the Alamo defenders died in the early morning light of March 6, 1836.



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DIGGING UP HARVEY LOGAN

In the January 1997 "Answer Man," Chuck Parsons discussed a reader's suggestion that Harvey Logan could have been the red-bearded, Texas gunman named "Harvey" whom explorer Colonel Percy H. Fawcett met in 1906 in Rurrenabaque, a squalid jungle town on the Río Beni in eastern Bolivia.

For several reasons, Parsons was not too keen on the possibility. Here are some additional reasons. From the context of the passage of Fawcett's book, *Lost Trails, Lost Cities,* Harvey was probably the man's last name, not his first. Second, Harvey Logan, whose hair was usually reported as dark or black, had never been described as having a red beard. Finally, Fawcett revisited Rurrenabaque in 1913 and Harvey-the-Texas-gunman was still there. Logan, a footloose Rocky Mountain outlaw, would not have stayed put seven years in one place, least of all in a steamy, jungle-river port.—*Daniel Buck, Washington, DC.*

Editor's Note: Dan Buck and his wife, author Anne Meadows, still have dirt under their fingernails from excavating graves outside the village of San Vicente, Bolivia, in their search for Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. Their adventures are chronicled in Anne's book, *Digging Up Butch and Sundance.*

Books for Columbus

Thanks so much for the wonderful gifts. The books are great and the magazine, *True West,* is sure to be very popular. The ones you sent have already been checked out several times. The new issue arrived in the mail today. Thank you again.—*Jeane E. Canfield, Columbus Village Library, Columbus, New Mexico.*

Reading your "From the Editor" in regards to the Columbus kids, it raises the question of contributing books as a tax deduction. I know of several bookstores that have many surplus books, but they are reluctant to pay the postage due to their overhead. However, the books are free for the asking.

I have sent several books from my Ghost Town collection and several others.

Much success with the book drive, and I enjoyed the editorial.—*Donald Pullman, Burkeville, Virginia.*

Editor's Note: Thanks for contributing to the cause, Mr. Pullman, and thanks to anyone who sent books out Columbus way. If you would like to send books, the address is: Columbus Village Library, P.O. Box 270, Columbus, New Mexico 88029.

Grotesque and Ugly

I love the new *True West* but the drawing entitled "The Death of Joe Grant" [January 1997 *True West*] is the *worst* thing I have ever seen in your magazine in the twenty years I have been reading it. It is grotesque and ugly. I like everything else about the magazine. You are doing a good job.—*unsigned, via the Internet.*

Editor's Note: We have received quite a few entries for our "Name the Cartoon Contest," and I will put "Grotesque and Ugly" in the hopper with all the rest. As far as the actual

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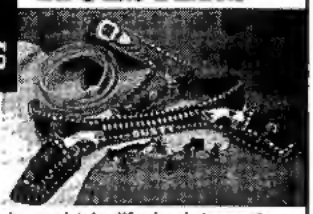

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"death of Joe Grant," I don't think Joe Grant was too crazy about it either, but around here we love Bill Henderson's cartoons.

Smoke Gets in Your Eyes

In your September issue, in the story "She Paints Indians," it was stated, "Most Pomo Indians become blind in their old age from sitting all their lives over the smoke of their campfires."

As an opthalmologist, I can state with certainty that there is no way this type of smoke exposure could lead to blindness. Although this statement was made by Grace Hudson almost a hundred years ago, I wanted to reassure your readers that in the present, when we are told to be aware of everything from cholesterol to the water we drink, the only smoke that is dangerous is the kind we inhale from cigarettes and cigars.—*Mithcell E. Davis, M.D., Rockville, Maryland.*

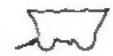
Internet Visitors & Kudos

I have been an avid reader of *True West* for some time now. I have just purchased a computer for the first time and I'm just learning to explore the wonderful world of cyberspace. My question is this, do you have a web site or could you recommend any with a good western theme? Keep up the good work.—*Chris Arp, via the Internet.*

Great [web] page. I just found it. I don't have a viewer that shows photos but it looks good. Keep it up to date. I get both mags, "rags" as Hosstail would say. Have for thirty-five years.—*John Craft, via the Internet.*

I just wanted to tell you that I love your magazine. I'm a die hard Old West fan and I love to read about it. Your magazine is the greatest I have seen in awhile. You always feature things I have never heard of. You should be complimented on your research. I also love the fact that you publish monthly. Sometimes I'm too anxious to wait for bi-monthly magazines. Keep up the good work, I look forward to your next issue.—*Jon Murphy, via the Internet.*

Editor's Note: For all of you still poking around the Internet with no place to go, stop and see us at www.cowboy.net/western. There are more western sites easily accessible from our site, including museums, historical organizations, and "other" western publications. We've been meaning to update the page for some time, but the old excuse mule keeps getting in the way.



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Western Roundup

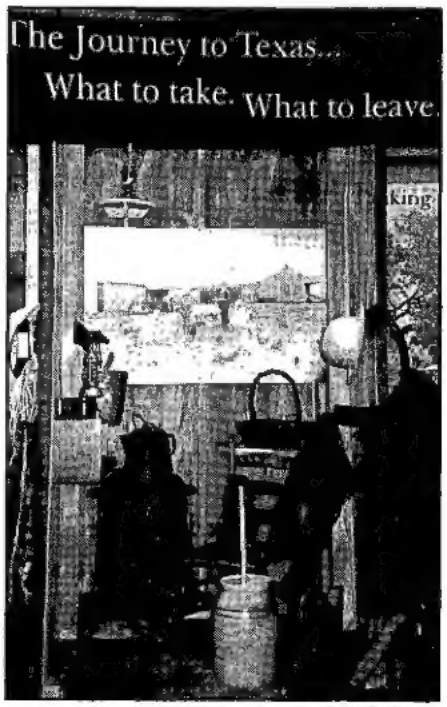
The Republic of Texas Museum

by

David F. Crosby

"Come and take it" were the words that started the Texas Revolution. The citizens of Gonzales wrote that challenge on a white flag in 1835 and flew it over the town's ancient artillery piece when Mexican cavalry arrived to confiscate their cannon. The Mexican army lost the fight and soon the war. The Republic of Texas was born, a land filled with opportunity and plagued with violence. Today, you'll find the artifacts of both the good and the bad of Texas' past in the Republic of Texas Museum in Austin.

The Daughters of the Republic of Texas opened the Museum in 1903. Originally housed in the state capitol, the museum moved to the gen-



Author's Collection

Leaving your home behind is always painful. A display in the "Gone to Texas" exhibit shows visitors what moving cost early Texas emmigrants.

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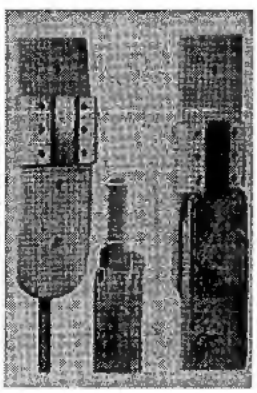
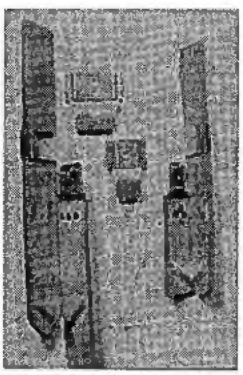
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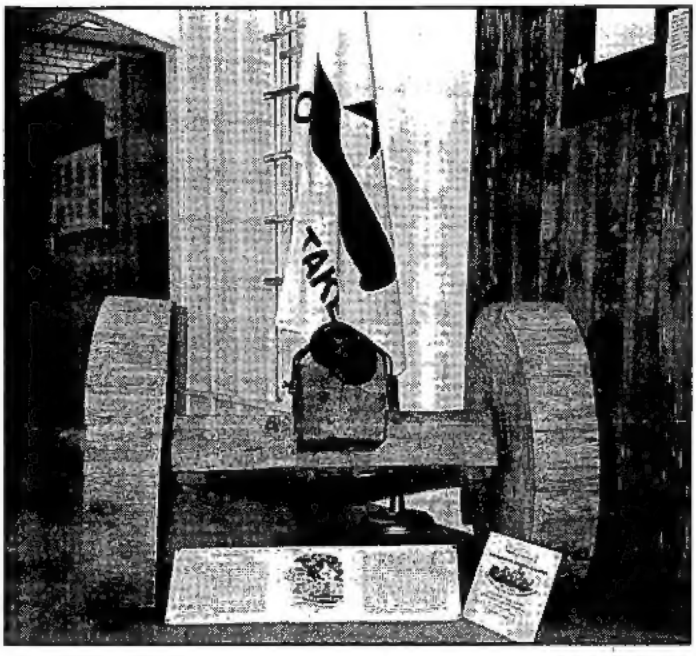
eral land office in 1917. In 1991, the centenial of the group's founding, the Daughters of the Republic of Texas purchased a separate building for the museum. A year later, the new Republic of Texas Museum opened to the public.

Inside awaits military artifacts from the Alamo. Musket and cannon balls, bayonets, and rifle remnants reside with the everyday utensils—copper spoons, pottery, and buttons —of both victor and vanquished. A carved wooden beam bears the words of General Edward Burleson, "Thermoplae had her messenger of defeat; the Alamo had none." For Texans, only battlefield artifacts survived the Alamo.



Author's Collection
A replica of the "Come and Take It" cannon. It was a fight over this cannon that started the Texas War of Independence.

Military and Old West artwork abounds throughout the museum: portraits of famous Texas Rangers, oil paintings of battles fought during the Texas Revolution and the early days of the republic, and images of the enemies of Texas, men like General Antonio Lopéz de Santa Anna.

An excellent weapons collection includes rifles and pistols from the 1820s to the 1870s. Included is a pair of dueling pistols owned and used by Santa Anna. The museum has a replica of the "Come and Take It" cannon on display.

The Albert Sidney Johnston exhibit displays personal and military items belonging to Texas' greatest soldier. Johnston, an 1826 graduate of West Point, resigned from the United States Army in 1834. A veteran of the Texas War of Independence, he rose to command the Republic of Texas army and then held the post of Texas secretary of war. He was also instrumental in beating back Indian and Mexican threats to the infant republic. In 1849, he rejoined the U.S. Army as a colonel and was assigned the task of squashing the Mormon rebellion in Utah. When the Civil War broke out, he decided that he couldn't fight against his beloved Texas and resigned his commission in the army. Made a full general in the Confederate army, he died early in the war at the Battle of Shiloh. Many historians believe his death changed the course of the war.

The Republic of Texas Museum is located at 510 East Anderson Lane in Austin, and is open Monday through Friday from 10 AM to 4 PM. Admission is $2.00 for adults and 50¢ for students. For more information call (512) 339-1997 or write to the museum at 510 East Anderson Lane, Austin, Texas 78752.

Western Roundup is a report on places to go and things to see associated with the history of the Old West. Submissions are welcome. Information on scheduled events should be submitted at least four months prior to the event. Items on historic places are also welcome. Send information including photos to: Western Roundup, Western Publications, P.O. Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076.

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TRAILS GROWN DIM

Harvey Girls

I am a writer trying to trace "Harvey Girls" in New Mexico. These pioneering young women came West in the early part of the century to work as waitresses for the Harvey hotels. Many of these women would probably be in their 80s or 90s now. I can be reached via e-mail at 74074.21452compuserve.com or at my postal address.—**S.R. Wittels, 1511 Camino Escuerte NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107.**

Simpson

I would like to get in touch with the descendants of Robert E. Simpson. He was born August 10, 1866, and died November 10, 1897, in Morgan Mill, Texas. He was married to Orpha C. Morton and had a son named Andrew J. Simpson. Andrew lived in Stephenville, Texas, in late 1899.—**John Munn, 797 Highway 43 South, Pelahatchie, Mississippi 39145.**

Stevens

For over thirty years we have searched for information on Norman H. Stevens, born January 6, 1871, to William and Susan Stevens in Butler, Bates County, Missouri. Norman was last heard of in Yakima County, Washington, and disappeared from there in 1898. Not long after, the family returned to Tyrone, Oklahoma, and family legend has it that Norman got into trouble for killing a deputy during a brawl.

We would appreciate any information on him, and would love to hear from his descendants.—**Jan Stevens, 411 Streeter Road, Silverlake, Washington 98645.**

Little

I would like some information on my great-grandfather, John Little. He was born May 25, 1849 in England. He married Mary Emma Rhodes in 1873 in England, and they had three children. In 1884 they immigrated to the United States and settled in Colorado.

John Little and his son, George, moved from Canyon City in 1903 and were never seen again. Being miners, it is possible they went to New Mexico. Any information on either of these men would be appreciated.—**Collette Machin Gibson, 201 East 100 North, Manti, Utah 84642.**

Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient. Please print or type your query and limit letters to 150 words or less. Photos are welcome. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to above is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write to us.

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A SCARBOROUGH FAMILY ALBUM

BY R.K. DEARMENT

Publication of a book on a historical figure, especially one whose name is not known in every American household, often prompts relatives to come forth with new information or documentation on the subject, material the author wishes he had when writing the original biography. This was the case with *George Scarborough: The Life and Death of a Lawman on the Closing Frontier*, my biography of an outstanding but little publicized western peace officer, published in 1992.

After the book appeared I was contacted by several Scarborough descendants, some of whom had artifacts pertaining to Scarborough's life which would have enhanced my work. Among these were unpublished photographs of Scarborough and his family, many of which were preserved in an album by the officer's widow after his death in the line of duty in 1900. Here are ten of those family photographs, all published for the first time.

Robert K. DeArment is the author of numerous articles and books detailing the history of the American West, including Bat Masterson: The Man and the Legend; Knights of the Green Cloth: The Saga of Frontier Gamblers; George Scarborough: The Life and Death of a Lawman on the Closing Frontier; *and most recently,* Alias Frank Canton. *Mr. DeArment's article, "John Larn's Bloody Trail Drive," appeared in the January 1997* True West.

All photos courtesy of the author.

George Scarborough at the age of thirty-one in 1890. This was taken when George was working as a range detective, after he had served two terms as sheriff of Jones County, Texas, and before he moved to El Paso to assume the position of deputy United States marshal for the district.

Mary Frances McMahan Scarborough, called "Mollie" by the family, as a young woman.

Four of the seven children of George and Mollie Scarborough. Standing, left to right: Georgie May, age six; George Edgar, age eleven; and Martha Ann, age eight. The barefoot tyke in front is three-year-old Ethel.

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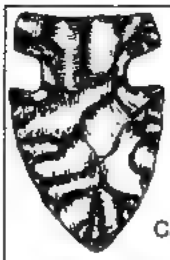

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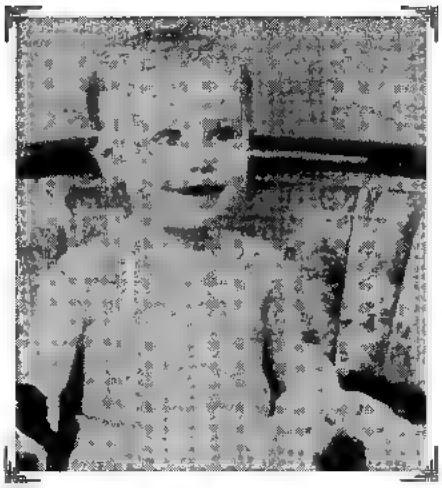
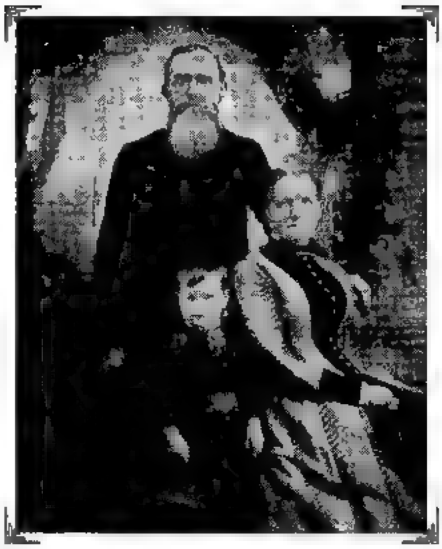


(Left) Ray Scarborough, the youngest of George and Mollie's children, born in September 1894.

(Below) Wedding photograph of George and Mollie Scarborough, married on August 30, 1877, in McLennan County, Texas. The new husband and wife were both seventeen years old.

(Above) Thirty-year-old Mollie Scarborough, seated on swing, and Ada Scarborough, George's sister, age twenty-five, in 1890.

(Below) Martha Rutland Scarborough, mother of George.



(Above) Dr. Francis Marion McMahan and Mrs. Mary Ann Liggett McMahan, parents of Mollie Scarborough and Frank McMahan. The child is not identified.

(Above) Mollie Scarborough at the age of seventy-nine. Photo taken in San Antonio, Texas, in 1939. Mollie outlived her husband by almost half a century. She died at Burbank, California, in 1949.

(Above) A young Francis Marion "Frank" McMahan, brother of Mollie. He sided with his brother-in-law, George Scarborough, in law enforcement in both Texas and New Mexico. Like Scarborough, he remained a peace officer until his dying day.

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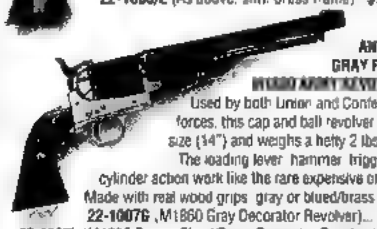

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THE BLOODY BUTCHER O

BY GLENN SHIRLEY

Well-known are the "Bloody Benders"—Kate Bender, her aged father and mother, and her half-witted brother John—who, in 1871, established a wayside inn in Labette County, Kansas, on the main road from Fort Scott to Independence. Patently a place to accommodate settlers trekking into the sunset, it became primarily the vanishing point for lone travelers with money and easily disposable possessions. Seven persons were murdered, robbed, and buried in the adjoining orchard before the family was discovered. Their demise remains one of the West's great mysteries.

Their operations, however, hardly compare to the appalling enterprise of Belle Gunness, the turn-of-the-century female bluebeard whose well-kept farm near Laporte, Indiana, was the hotbed of at least twenty assassinations. The diabolical ingenuity she used in executing her atrocities also excelled that of the Benders, because theirs were done by a whole family, and her's alone, ranking her second to none in the annals of crime in America....

Why so many men succumbed to her wiles is as much a mystery as the reason she became a murderess. She was no prize beauty.

She wore her stringy, sandy-colored hair in a severe "Gibson Girl" manner, but was far from being Charles Dana Gibson's pen-and-ink conceptions of the ideal American woman. Plain of face, large-boned, and weighing 200 pounds, she was described actually as "homely." Yet, her plumpness was not so much inclined to fatness as to muscular stoutness, which, strangely, drew unsuspecting males to her boudoir.

Belle's lack of emotion for death's horrors can be attributed perhaps to what little is known of her childhood. She was born at Christiana, South Norway, and confirmed at Christianaland as Belle Paulsen. Her mother was regarded as a respectable woman. Her father was Fetters Paulsen, a Swede of gypsy origin, who performed as a conjurer and sword swallower at public fairs and made considerable money. Julius Bastel, an old artist friend of the Paulsens, stated that he first met them at Karlstand, Sweden, in 1868. Belle, then six or seven years of age, accompanied her father and mother.

Part of Paulsen's repertorie was a decapitation act, in which he placed his wife's head in a miniature guillotine and apparently chopped it off with a glittering ax, the head dropping into a basket while the "blood" gushed forth in streams. Belle was an interested front-row spectator. Before long, she developed a mania for breaking the heads off her dolls. One day her mother caught her cutting off a doll's head with a knife. True to mother instinct and intuition, Mrs. Paulsen persuaded her partner-husband to substitute their decapitation act with one of less sensational qualities.

Paulsen, according to Bastel, was a brutal man and frugal with the family earnings. Some time later, he died from "accidentally" falling down a flight of stairs and landing on a saber.

It is believed that Mrs. Paulsen continued in theatrical work of some sort until her natural death. Belle's life is picked up at age fourteen, when she migrated to America, working as a housekeeper in the Chicago area until age twenty-four.

Such menial existence was not for Belle, however. She lusted for wealth at least commensurate with that of her late father and mother, and looked toward marriage. In the mid-1880s, marriage was the only secure career for a woman. But Belle's plumpness had come early, she was a bit older than most brides of the time, so probably was in no great demand as a wife. By devious means, she met and married Merrel "Max" Sorenson, a middle-aged widower and private detective by profession, who was employed in a Chicago department store and resided in the suburb of Austin.

During their few years of questionable wedded bliss, Belle prevailed on her husband to take out a $3,500 life insurance policy and a $4,000 policy from another company. On June 30, 1900, Sorenson died, allegedly due to a digestive ailment. Relatives claimed he had been poisoned, but had no definite evidence. An inquest was ordered soon after the body was buried, but the body was never disinterred, and Belle was richer by $7,500.

The country doctor who attended Sorenson on the day he died at Austin made this observation about Belle years afterward:

"I remember her well as a religious fanatic type....The sudden wealth, comparatively speaking, that came to her I believe had its effect on a mind already unhinged...may have been for her an irresistible suggestion of the ease with which money might be obtained. In the incident of her husband's death, her temptation to commit her

LAPORTE: PART I

future atrocities may have had its birth."

Belle sold her Austin home for $5,000. With her new gains, she appeared the spring of 1901 sixty miles southeast of Chicago in the northern Indiana town of Laporte. She had read in the newspapers about a "haunted farm" in the vicinity. Due to its sinister reputation, it was for sale cheap to anyone interested in purchasing it.

The farm consisted of seventy-five acres about a mile from the city limits, on a boulevard road once lined with wine cellars and joints known as the red light district. A two-story, twelve-room house with a cellar basement stood on a high hill surrounded by trees. At the back, neglected fields sloped away on three sides of a large barn and a windmill.

The place had belonged to one Mattie Altic—a well-known bordello. One desperate character frequenting the resort was G. Hile Carr, leader of a gang of outlaws that terrorized this section of Indiana in 1877 before he was driven west and slain in a Denver holdup. During one night of revelry at the bordello, several persons had been mysteriously slain, their murderer never apprehended. The place became a sore spot to the citizens of Laporte, but just as steps were being taken to close it, Mattie Altic dropped dead of heart disease, in the doorway. The old house, uninhabited since that time, stood in ruin and desolation. Everyone shunned it.

Superstitious neighbors predicted that Belle wouldn't occupy the farm long. "The spooks will drive her out," they said. But Belle merely laughed. In no way superstitious herself, she saw it as a place safely away from Chicago's many physicians and chemists.

Author's Collection

Belle Gunness, 200 pounds of doom.

By year's end there was nothing about the farm to suggest it was an abode of ghosts. Carpenters and painters spruced up the house. Neatly trimmed lawns were dotted with shrubbery and flower plots. A fine driveway led from the road past a refurbished orchard of apples, plums, and currants. Hired men cultivated all kinds of crops. The barn stabled four work and driving horses and several milk cows. A high wire-and-board fence penned a big herd of hogs.

Then Belle was romancing again. Peter Gunness, a middle-aged immigrant from Norway whom she had known in Chicago as an acquaintance of the now-defunct Max Sorenson, arrived at the farm. Belle

became his not-so-blushing bride early in 1902, donned a second gold wedding band, and thereafter was always known as Gunness. She also promptly saw to her new husband's welfare. Gunness took out a life insurance policy for $4,000.

The couple joined a local church, attended regularly and contributed liberally to its causes. How far Belle's sincerity went in this direction can only be imagined. When Gunness insisted that they have children, Belle (perhaps because of her childhood love of dolls) made a bold display of maternal instincts by adopting three orphans—two little girls, Myrtle, then age seven; Lucy, five; and a baby boy, Phillip, about two years old. The farm also became the home of twelve-year-old Jennie Olsen, left under Gunness' supervision by her widower father, Antone Olsen, whom Gunness had known in Illinois.

Gunness looked after the foster children as if they were his own. He was a happy-natured sort. Neighbors liked him better than his huge Norwegian wife. Three months later, in December, Gunness was dead.

Belle claimed that, while preparing sausage in their basement shop, a meat grinder had toppled from a shelf, crushing her husband's skull. The coroner, being a more logical man than the country doctor on the occasion of Sorenson's death, questioned an ordinary meat grinder falling with such force as to cause such damage. And Belle failed to explain what the grinder was doing above her husband's head.

The coroner ordered a full investigation. But public sentiment was strongly against him. That such a God-fearing woman should be even suspected of a terrible thing like murder was preposterous! In the absence of real proof of foul play, the official decision was that poor Peter had died by accident. The bereaved widow continued in the esteem of the church and community, and Gunness' insurance company paid her $4,000.

Author's Collection

Belle Gunness and her foster children, (left to right) Myrtle, Lucy, and Phillip.

Having come close to being caught in her second venture, Belle devised a different method of disposing of her victims by which she would not come under the critical eyes of the authorities.

She engaged a mason to build a cement smokehouse, the entrance to which could be made directly from her kitchen. In the smokehouse she installed meat hooks, a butchering block, and a complete set of tools for dissecting hogs. The cellar—also entered from the kitchen—she equipped with a vat, scraping table, and a machine for pulverizing bones for her chickens, as such food, she said, was an excellent egg producer. Then she laid out a 50x75 feet plot of ground a dozen yards from the house and fenced it with rabbit wire, eight feet in height to keep out animals that might be inclined to explore the area. It was, she hinted, to be a vegetable garden.

Belle kept much to herself after that. She fed the chickens, tended the livestock, pitched hay, and did the hard farm work alongside occasional hired help. Awed by her brawn and strength, one hired man swore that he saw her take a squealing, two "hunnert" and fifty pound porker under her arm and hurl it bodily into the pen. She kept up to 100 hogs, butchered them herself, and did a thriving business in sausage meat through a Laporte commission house.

She allowed no one inside her home except her foster children. The children seemed to fear her. She sent them to school when she felt like it, attended church infrequently, and became somewhat

uncommunicative and surly with neighboring housewives who came to visit. But her sausage was excellent, and she might have been dismissed as an eccentric female recluse had it not been for the amount of mail she began receiving and the succession of well-dressed men from distant states who arrived at the Laporte railroad depot bound for her farm.

Belle had schemed to bilk lovelorn suitors. The advertisements she placed in matrimonial journals and newspapers ran generally as follows:

> PERSONAL— Charming, but lonesome young widow, owning a fine farm in Laporte County, Indiana, wishes to make the acquaintance of a respectable gentleman of substantial means. Object, matrimony. No letters considered unless writer is willing to become personally acquainted at the earliest opportunity.

The ads drew applicants as honey draws flies. The flood of mail became a joke around the Laporte post office, for Belle was now forty-two and anything but the "charming widow" she pretended to be. In her replies, Belle stressed the desire to know what means the applicant possessed, whether cash or property that could be converted into cash, and carefully inquired about kinsfolk, so there would be no danger of their arrival later to cause her embarrassment. Those who "qualified" she bombarded with "read-between-the-lines" love epistles, which so upset their mentality that they lost no time high-tailing it to their lady-love in Laporte.

Word passed from time to time that the Widow Gunness was going to marry again. But suddenly the would-be benedicts would disappear. Belle was so fat and unkempt the thinking was that their dreams of fireside bliss faded, and they just left.

George Anderson, a thirty-nine-year-old, wealthy farmer from Montieth, Michigan, who visited Mrs. Gunness in 1902, gave a different reason. He slept in an upper bedroom that night, and awoke suddenly to find Belle bending over him with something in her hand that gleamed in the semi-darkness.

Anderson bolted upright. "What is it?" he quavered.

The woman thrust the object she carried beneath her night robe. "Oh, I thought I heard you cry out in your sleep," she replied, then left the room abruptly.

Anderson was almost positive that the object was a butcher knife. He slipped on his trousers and escaped out the window without even bothering to take his satchel, which contained $700. Telling about it years later, he felt lucky to be one of the few prospective "husbands" to leave the Gunness farm in one piece.

An estimated dozen applicants who followed Anderson were not so lucky. Among these was Henry Gurholt, of Scandinavia, Wisconsin, who was known to be communicating with a woman whose advertisement he had read in a newspaper. Friends declared he was corresponding with Mrs. Gunness. Gurholt was not heard of after leaving home July 4, 1906, saying he was going to marry a widow.

Ole Budsberg, another Norwegian and a successful logger, of Iola, Wisconsin, came to the Gunness farm with $2,000 cash saved from his logging operation, and, like the others before him, disappeared.

Author's Collection

Jennie Olsen was never heard from after she reportedly was sent to school in California.

Emil Greening, a young Laporte carpenter who worked at the farm the summer of 1906, recalled:

"There were different men at the house every week. They always had money, and I never saw them leave the place. Some brought trunks but rarely took them away. Mrs. Gunness kept them in the cellar....At night I would see her puttering around in her garden....

"She rarely showed her children any affection and always made them stay away from the visitors. Jennie Olsen [then sixteen] and I were good friends. She told me her mother had decided to send her to school in California with a professor who was to come after her, but whom I never saw.

"Jennie came to me and declared that she would never go. One morning I didn't see her, and Mrs. Gunness said she had gone. I wrote two letters to Jennie, which I gave to Mrs. Gunness, but never received any answer. I got so tired of working around the place without seeing Jennie that I left.

"That was in September. I don't believe there ever was a professor."

On Christmas Eve, 1906, Belle welcomed a John Moo, whom she introduced to curious neighbors as her cousin from Norway. Moo, how-

ever, had been a successful business man at Elbow Lake, Minnesota. At age fifty, he felt that money and fine clothes were no substitute for marital bliss and had answered Belle's ad in a "wedding bells" magazine. After spending a few days at the farm, he too was gone, quite suddenly. In June 1907, Belle employed a local carpenter named Ray Lamphere to repair a sagging floor in her kitchen. Afterwards, she asked him to stay on as her hired man. Lamphere, a strapping fellow, had spent his boyhood around Springville, a hamlet seven miles north of Laporte, where his father had been a township justice of the peace. Though a good worker, he was addicted to the bottle, and when in his cups, he grew quite talkative.

"Belle may not be much to look at," he remarked in a saloon one night, "but my, how that woman can love." His broad wink left no doubt that he shared the widow's bed, and there was new food for gossip in Laporte.

Author's Collection

Ray Lamphere knew too much about the "goings-on" at the Gunness farm.

A committee of outraged dowagers representing several women's clubs appealed to Sheriff Albert Smutzer, of Laporte County, to clean out the Gunness "nest of sin." The sheriff considered it a local rather than county matter, and took no action until the following winter.

Andrew Helgelein, a thrifty, wife-seeking Norwegian bachelor of Aberdeen, South Dakota, received a honey-kissed letter from Belle, promising "true love and a long life of wedded bliss." She also casually mentioned the need to pay off a "pressing mortgage." In late December, Helgelein appeared with Mrs. Gunness at the Laporte bank with a draft for $3,000, which he wished to cash. It was drawn on an Aberdeen bank. The Laporte bank did not know Helgelein, and would not accept Mrs. Gunness' endorsement for so large an amount. So the draft was left there for collection.

The evening of January 4, 1908, Lamphere was building a fire in the sitting room stove at the Gunness farm when startled by a stranger who came down the stairs. This was Helgelein, he was told by Mrs. Gunness, who returned from a sausage delivery in Laporte to find the two men engaged in questioning each other's identity. In a rage, she ordered Lamphere to go to the barn "where he belonged."

Jealousy surged in Lamphere's heart. That night he watched Helgelein and the woman at doors and windows, and heard Mrs. Gunness tell Helgelein: "I'm sick of having Lamphere around. I would give him a dose of chloral, if I knew how much it would take to kill him."

The next day Lamphere told a friend in Laporte what he had heard. His confidant advised him to "pack his kit and clear out," but in hopes of relegating matters with Belle, he returned to the farm.

On January 11, the money for Helgelein's draft came in, and was turned over to him by the Laporte bank. It was the last anyone saw of the Aberdeen bachelor.

In March, Sheriff Smutzer received a letter from one Selmer Helgelein, of Aberdeen, which read in part:

> My brother, Andrew, left here three months ago to visit a lady in Laporte. I do not know the lady's name, but I have heard nothing from Andrew and am afraid something might have happened to him....He was carrying a bank draft for $3,000....All his friends are mystified.

Smutzer went to the farm and interviewed Belle

"Do they think I made away with him?" she demanded, angrily. Then she explained: "He decided against marriage, like all the rest—said he was going to Norway or Sweden—I don't remember which."

As to Helgelein's departure, Lamphere told Smutzer: "Belle gave me money the afternoon of January 14 to have a good time in Michigan City. Ordered me to stay all night, and I followed her orders." Helgelein was gone when he returned.

Concluded next month.

THE SAGA OF "TERRIBLE" FRED WITTROCK

By Roy O'Dell

Although "Terrible" Fred Wittrock, alias Jim M. Cummings, was not rated as an expert train robber such as the likes of Jesse James or the cold and calculated Marion Hedgepeth, both of whom had already made their names in Missouri, he masterminded an ingenious plan to rob a train which gave him the credibility he so rightly deserves.

Early on the morning of October 26, 1886, the Saint Louis Union Station was buzzing with rumors that sometime during the night the westbound Saint Louis & San Francisco express had been held up.

Newspapers soon confirmed the robbery:

> St. Louis, Oct. 26. The greatest sensation created in this city since the days of the James gang was caused this morning by the announcement that the Adams Express Company's messenger on the Saint Louis and San Francisco train, which left St. Louis at 8:30 o'clock last night, had been overpowered, (first reports stated the messenger had been killed) bound and gagged, and the car robbed of $50,000, shortly after leaving this city.

David S. Fotheringham, the messenger, claimed in his statement that shortly before the train started a man came to him with a letter purporting to be signed by Superintendent W.H. Damsel and J.B. Barrett, the route agent, instructing him to take the bearer, Jim Cummings, on his run as far as Pierco City for instructions.

Pinkerton's, Inc.

Fred Wittrock, alias "Jim Cummings."

In accordance with these supposed instructions, Fotheringham took the stranger, who was a young man, and set him to work checking up. Then he began his own work. Fotheringham was standing with his back to the stranger, his coat off, and the handle of his revolver sticking out of the pistol pocket. About ten or fifteen miles away from the station he was attacked from the rear. The stranger gripped the messenger's neck with one hand and grasped his revolver with the other. Before Fotheringham realized what was being done, he was thrown to the floor. He struggled but the stranger overcame him and bound him hand and foot. Fotheringham was gagged and tied to the safe.

Having secured the messenger, the stranger proceeded to go through the safe and take all there was in it. Several pouches of silver were cut open, but the robber left them when he found what the contents were. At Mincke some men working in a lime kiln flagged the train to warn of an obstruction on the track. While it was stopped, someone tried to get into the express car, but the robber stood over Fotheringham with a revolver and prevented his making any effort to cry out.

At, or about, Pacific Station, the robber gathered his plunder and opening the front door of the car, escaped onto the platform.

Fotheringham lay on the floor of the car until the train reached Saint

Author's Collection

Marion Hedgepeth, Missouri outlaw.

Clair, when he was able to work the gag out of his mouth and cry for assistance.

The trainmen, hearing Fotheringham, endeavored to get in the back door, and finding it locked, went around to the front door, which the robber had left open. They released Fotheringham and listened as he described the robber as about six feet in height, twenty-four years old, weighing around 200 pounds, with dark hair cut close, and a thin, dark mustache. The robber had a low forehead, and wore dark clothes, including a gray overcoat.

The information was immediately telegraphed to express officials in Saint Louis. The railroad superintendent, William Damsel, ordered Fotheringham to come back by the first train and put detectives to work on the case immediately. One of the detectives met Fotheringham at the station and placed him under arrest. He was not locked up but was kept under close surveillance.

Officials were of the opinion that "It is thought to be a very singular thing that one man could accomplish all that has been claimed for the robber."

Chief of Police Huebler, when asked his opinion on the subject, replied, "Well, it would be an extraordinary display of muscle. The express messenger's story does not receive much credence with the public and apparently very little with the express officials or the detectives."

When Fotheringham' told his story to the Pinkertons, who were retained by Adams to handle robbery investigations, the detectives were also very skeptical and warned Adams' officials not to take the messenger's story at face value.

A couple of days after the robbery there were still no clues to the identity of the robber or any further developments. The Saint Louis newspapers reported on October 27 that "in regard to the report that Messenger Fotheringham had made a confession he stated that there was no truth in it, that they were working on the theory that the messenger's story was true, that the latter has not been arrested or placed under surveillance, but of his own accord was in constant communication with officers of the company and the detectives who have this matter in hand."

Fotheringham, in relating his experiences with the robber, said:

> ..after binding me, Cummings, as he called himself, took the key of the safe from my pocket, unlocked the safe, and took the pouches out. He then took his knife from his pocket, cut the pouches open and removed their contents.
>
> He removed some articles of clothing from his bag and threw them out of the window of the south side of the car We were then somewhere near Merimec, I should judge, for we had just passed through a tunnel.
>
> He transferred the money to his bag and was then ready to make his escape. Before he left he said to me 'You would be surprised if I told you who I am!' I said: 'I don't know as I would.' 'Well' he continued, 'I am Jim Cummings, the last of the Jesse James gang. I was in that Blue Cut job, and only got $1,500 out of it
>
> 'Since then I have passed considerable time in Australia and San Francisco,' the robber said. He seemed familiar with the names and doings of the various members of the James gang. When we began talking he removed the gag from my mouth, but when the train reached a point near Pacific he replaced it so that I could make no outcry, in the mean time threatening to blow my

brains out if I attempted to attract anyone's attention.

On October 29, newspapers reported the belief that the robbery was committed by several employees of the express and railroad companies, carefully planned with the knowledge of Fotheringham, the money to be divided between them. It was stated at first that the amount stolen was slightly in excess of $50,000, but claims had already been presented to the company for the amount of $81,000. The sum secured by the robber rose each day until it was thought that the total would exceed $100,000.

Detectives had been busy in the city and reported to Damsel that they had at last struck the right clue, they were sure of their man, and he would be arrested.

Fotheringham, who had been under suspicion from day one, was hounded by officials and detectives alike, but he still claimed his innocence. On November 8, the newspapers reported that:

"A petition of habeas corpus was presented to Judge Thayer by Mrs. Lizzie Root on behalf of her son, David S. Fotheringham, the messenger who was in charge of the car at the time of the robbery. The petition sets forth that he is detained, confined, and restrained of his liberty at the Southern Hotel, in this city, by the Adams Express Company, William H. Damsel, and Robert Pinkerton of Pinkerton's Detective Agency; that such detention is illegal and without any warrant of law, and that he is locked up in a room in the hotel at the caprice and mere force of the express company and its agents, who constantly watch over him and restrain him against his consent, and to his great humiliation. His release is demanded or that any evidence against him be turned over to the grand jury."

Investigations were still moving very slowly when word came to the Adams officials that the Saint Louis *Globe* had received a mysterious letter signed by a person claiming to be the robber, "Jim Cummings."

The Cummings letter was printed in the morning paper. It was dated Saint Joseph, Missouri, October 31, and signed "Jim Cummings." It was purported to give the full history of the robbery. The letter enclosed two express money envelopes, one from which $30,000 had been extracted and the other which had contained $12,000. A memorandum from the cashier of the Continental Bank was also enclosed. This informed the American National Bank of Kansas City that $30,000 had been enclosed. The "Cummings" letter stated that his reason for writing was to clear Fotheringham from any suspicion of being involved in the crime.

Kansas Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas

Jesse James, the leader of the gang Fred Wittrock claimed to have been a member of under the alias, "Jim Cummings."

The letter gave full details of the robbery and asserted that Fotheringham had been taken completely by surprise, and had not taken part in the crime, except as an unwilling victim. The writer told of a previous attempt to rob the train at Cuba Junction and gave details about the manner in which he and an accomplice had acquired letterheads, cards, and signatures of express officials to enable them to forge the order permitting them to ride in the car with the messenger.

The letter stated that the robbers had a boat, camping outfit, two guns, and a box of provisions which they had secreted near the bridge at

Railway Train Services

Railway mail clerks at work.

Saint Charles, Missouri, and also a package containing a revolver which they had left at the check stand at the Union Station in Saint Louis on the day of the robbery. Following the directions given in the letter, the guns and provisions were readily found by the detectives, including the package containing the revolver.

Despite the letter, Fotheringham's credibility began to crumble. Two trainsmen came forward who said that they saw Fotheringham talking to Cummings on the night of the robbery and their account of the scene differed from his. Also, a handwriting expert was brought in to look at the letters, and he stated that he would testify under oath that the letters had, in fact, been written by Fotheringham.

The case was given to the grand jury who returned an indictment against the messenger as the newspapers reported:

St. Louis, Mo., Nov. 10 —Among the testimony presented to the Grand Jury which found an indictment for grand larceny and for receiving stolen property against David S. Fotheringham, the Adams Express messenger, whose car was robbed some two weeks ago on the St. Louis and San Francisco Road, was that of James Hefferman, a Wabash engineer, and that of Thomas Dwyer, an employee of the express company, and Fotheringham's helper. Hefferman testified as follows:

'I was in the Union Station on the evening of October 25, oiling my engine. My time to start was 8:25 pm, but just as I was about to get away I noticed that the 'Frisco train was across the main track. Of course I could not move until the 'Frisco got out the way. The express car was almost directly opposite my cab window, and I noticed that the door of the cab was standing open. The messenger and his helper were inside, busy with their duties. It was nearly time for the 'Frisco train to start, and Dwyer swung himself off the car and went away. A minute or two later a man came along with a valise in his hand and stopped directly under the electric light and within a few feet of my engine. He answered Fotheringham's description of the robber as far as I remember, except that he was a couple of inches shorter. He wore his hat well forward over his face, and I could not make out his features very clearly. He asked me which was the 'Frisco train and I pointed it out to him.

'It was moving away, and he ran alongside of it until he reached the express car, the door of which was still standing open, (a very unusual thing by the way) threw his valise inside, reached up his hand, and was pulled through the door into the car. He could not have jumped in without assistance, and especially with the train in

motion. I believe Fotheringham helped him.'

Thomas Dwyer's testimony corroborated the engineer's story, and it was upon the facts presented by them, it is believed, that the indictments were found. "Cummings," who Fotheringham says committed the robbery, is carrying on quite a voluminous correspondence for one in his position. He first wrote to Frank James, the ex-bandit, then to the editor of a newspaper, and now to Fotheringham's mother inclosing [sic] in the letter $60 which, he suggests, may be of use in clearing her son of the suspicion resting upon him.

The evidence against Fotheringham seems overwhelming, discrepencies in his statements to the detectives indicated that he knew more of the manner in which the robbery was planned and executed than he would like to have them know, and an expert penman has stated under oath that all three letters were written by one person—Fotheringham?

It also transpired that the messenger's trunk had been searched soon after the robbery and a number of sheets of paper were found covered with copies of the signature of W.J. Barrett, manager of the express company. It is supposed that the messenger became able to forge this signature so that he might affix it to orders which the robber presented which allowed him to enter the car. Altogether it looked bad for the messenger.

On December 3, 1886, Fotheringham's bail was set at $20,000, a sum he could not furnish. Fotheringham's attorney argued that the messenger was a poor man and he would make an application to the Court of Appeals to have the bond reduced on the ground that it was excessive.

Things certainly looked bleak for the suspected messenger but soon took a turn for the better when it was reported in the newspapers on December 26 that the mysterious Jim Cummings had been captured.

Chicago, December 25—Jim Cummings and two other men believed to have been his accomplices in the daring robbery of the Adams express car on the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad on October 25, were arrested here yesterday, and are locked up at Pinkerton's headquarters. The tracks of Cummings had been very closely followed up by Pinkerton ever since the robbery, and it was discovered some weeks ago that he was infatuated with a frail woman at St. Louis, who was preparing to move to Chicago.

It was noticed that the man believed to be Jim Cummings never ventured out of doors during the day, and was generally careful of coming in contact with anybody, even at night.

The woman's movements were closely watched and she was soon located at a house on Halsted Street, near Hadison. Shortly after Cummings wrote his last letter to Saint Louis, three strange men arrived in Chicago and took up their residence at the same house as the woman from Saint Louis. They were rough looking fellows, with a swaggering gaits peculiar to brakeman. They kept very quiet during the first week of their stay in the city, but after that began to frequent gambling houses and other notorious resorts. The lavish manner in which they spent their money attracted the attention of another occupant of the house where they were living, and became suspicious that they might be connected with some great crime, the occupant contacted William Pinkerton. This information, combined with that already in the possession of the Pinkerton Agency, caused an unusually sharp lookout to be kept on the house on Halsted Street.

It was noticed that the man believed to be Jim Cummings never ventured out of doors during the day, and was generally careful of coming in contact with anybody, even at night. He was, in addition, carefully disguised. Things seemed ripe for a capture. Detectives made a descent upon the house at 9 o'clock Friday morning, and found Jim Cummings in bed. A package of $5,000 was found in his waistcoat pocket, and was identified as part of the proceeds of the express car robbery. The two other accomplices of Cummings were also arrested, and the party taken to Pinkerton's office.

"Cummings is described by a man who has seen him as about 35 years of age, fully six feet in height and of slim build, his weight not exceeding 170 pounds. He has dark hair and eyes, wore no beard, and two of his front upper teeth were decayed so as to be quite short, and their appearance would not fail to attract the attention of any ordinary observer. His complexion is fair, and his hair, which had been shingled and has grown out probably half an inch, looks as if it had been dyed. He wore a common suit of dark clothes that had (a) frayed and greasy look, a turn-down collar that was dirty and somewhat ragged, and a black necktie, the ends of the bow being tucked under his collar. His hands and feet are large for even a man of his height.

"One of his partners is about five feet seven inches high, with light hair and blue eyes, and a round face that is marked by numerous eruptions. The third man is of light build, but has black hair and a black mustache.

"Oscar Cook, a cooper, was arrested in a gambling house in the northeastern part of Kansas City on the same day as Cummings was arrested, on suspicion of complicity in the robbery. The real name of Cook is not known. He was sur-

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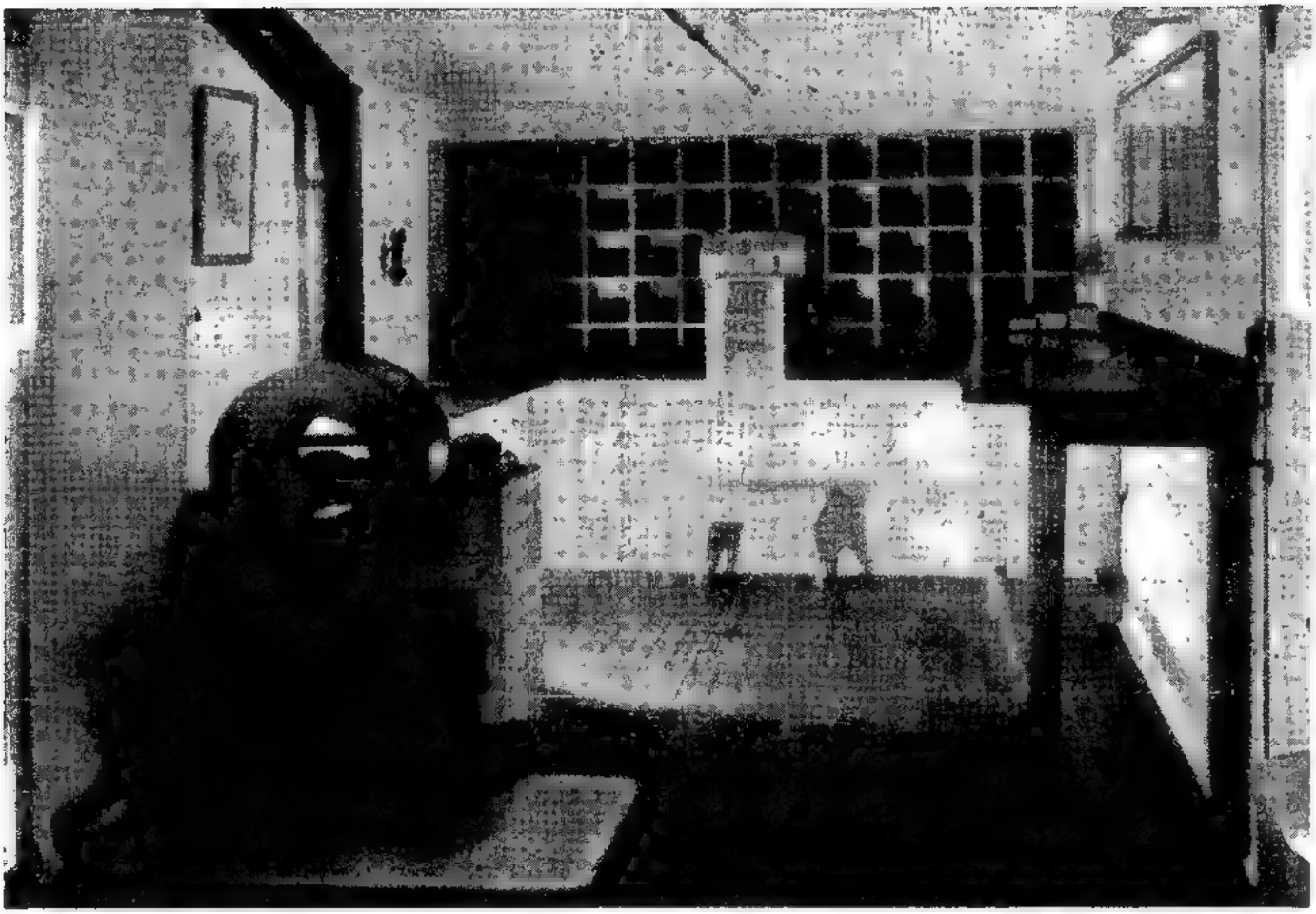

Burlington Lines

Interior of an early mail railcar.

prised at his capture. The man Wittrock who is in custody in Chicago, is well known in Kansas. He was at one time a bookkeeper for a Leavenworth firm and was a well informed man, capable of writing the Cummings letter. He distinguished himself by marrying the keeper of a disreputable house and disgracing his family."

Wittrock was surprisingly talkative and made a full confession to his part in the robbery. Detectives decided to transport Wittrock to Leavenworth, Kansas, in the hope of uncovering more of the stolen express money.

> The newspapers reported. Leavenworth, Kansas, Dec. 29 — When the Rock Island train arrived last night four men having in charge another, hastily left the rear coach, and jumping into a hack were rapidly driven toward North Leavenworth. A reporter caught one glimpse of the man covered by the other four, and saw the well known face of Fred Wittrock. The detectives, with their prisoner, were driven directly to the Wittrock residence. When the reporter, who followed, reached the house, the party had entered, and in a moment moans could be heard in the house, coming from the mother and two sisters, who were clinging to the now noted train robber.

Shortly after midnight the detectives brought Wittrock, alias Jim Cummings, to the city and took their prisoner to a hotel, where they rented a room and retired. Mrs. Wittrock was induced by a reporter to tell what she knew of the case, as her son's connection with it could not be concealed. Between broken sobs she admitted that Fred had participated in the robbery, but said he would be released, as he had confessed all to the detectives.

She said that shortly after the robbery Oscar Cook came to Leavenworth and visited her one evening. After talking to her for some time, Cook said that Fred was in trouble. He had made a large sum of money on a wheat deal in Chicago and had some difficulty with a broker over the matter, which ended by his shooting the latter. He had to flee the country and wanted his mother to take care of some money until she heard from him further. This she agreed to do, and the money was left in her possession.

Some time after that, another young man, who lived in the city but whose name she refused to divulge, called and left another package of money. On two other occasions, two young men called and left money, which they said had come from Fred. When asked if she knew the amounts or sum total, she said she did not. They were large packages, but she had never counted the money, believing implicitly in Fred's

story and thinking she was aiding him by caring for his property. She had no occasion to use any of the money, having money of her own.

When asked how the detectives happened to be here searching her house, she said: "When I read of Fred's arrest I immediately wrote to the express company telling them of the money and requesting them to come to Leavenworth, and that is undoubtedly why they were here."

This seemed to be all that Mrs. Wittrock could tell. Pinkerton was asked about the amount of money found. He at first denied that any had been recovered. When asked what an empty tin box had contained which was standing near by, the detective said that it had held about $19,000, and the box had been found in the ground under a barn near the house.

Wittrock's companions turned out to be William Haight and John Weaver, and with Oscar Cook, were all residents of Kansas City. Although Wittrock played the lead part in the robbery, it was Haight who seemed to be giving the orders, as the newspapers reported:

"It is stated that convincing proof of Haight's complicity in the robbery is in possession of the Pinkerton's, and there is no longer a doubt that Haight was the instigator of the crime, and that Weaver and Wittrock were his partners. It was Haight, it is said, who conceived the idea of writing to J.B. Barrett, the route agent, in order to get a copy of the gentleman's letter heads.

"Haight also had the bogus business cards with the name of "W.H. Damsel, Superintendent" on them. The Pinkerton's have learned that the plotters tried to have these letter heads and cards printed in St. Louis, but they were afraid or could not do so, and they had the work done in this city by a firm that had admitted it to the detectives, and told still further that Haight was the man who gave the order. It was on these letter heads and cards that the orders were written and used as a means to get Wittrock on board the express car with Fotheringham."

Wittrock claimed he committed the robbery to save his mother's homestead. The story was reported in the newspapers:

> Leavenworth, Kansas, Dec. 30, Mrs. Wittrock, the mother of 'Jim Cummings' was seen at her residence last night. She was very unwilling to say anything about the arrest of her son, but was anxious that the public should know the real cause of the robbery. She said she had wondered from the first what prompted the robbery, and the first question she asked her son after he had been brought to his home by the detectives was: 'Why did you take the money?'

Because, he responded, he was afraid that the $1,700 mortgage on her home would come due shortly, long before he would be able to pay it out of his business income. Rather than watch his mother lose her homestead, he had determined "to make a desperate effort to save it, and finally decided upon the plan of robbing the express car."

With the robbers now accounted for, and Wittrock's confession it seemed that Fotheringham had been telling the truth from the start and it looked inevitable that he would now be cleared of any complicity in the crime. However, Oscar Cook made a confession, which was published in the newspapers,claiming that Fotheringham knew more than he told:

> Kansas City, Dec. 30— Oscar Cook made a confession yesterday in which he stated that Fotheringham, the express messenger who is now in jail charged with complicity in the robbery, knew all about the plan to rob his car and was a willing victim to the attack of the robber. It is said that he was promised $10,000 of the amount stolen as his share of the booty, and that sum was a part of the money which Fred Wittrock sent to his mother for safe keeping. It was intention of the conspiritors to rob the car on the night of Oct. 22, and the first "Jim Cummings" letter was written before that time and dated on that day. On that night, however, there was not enough money in the car to pay the robbers for their trouble, and their plan was not finally carried out until Oct. 25. Should these statements be borne out by the facts in the case, Fotheringham will doubtless accompany his fellow conspiritors to the penitentiary.

On January 1, 1887, Pinkerton and Adams Express detectives arrived in Saint Louis with the express robbers and delivered them to the local police who placed the foursome behind bars to await trial.

As soon as the prisoners were released from the clutches of the Pinkertons it became possible to obtain further interviews with them. No one had much to say. Wittrock reported that he and Haight had planned the robbery and claimed that Fotheringham had known nothing about the scheme and was completely innocent. On January 4, the trial was reported in the press:

> St. Louis, Missouri, Jan 4, —The probability that Fred Wittrock, the Adams Express robber, and his confederates would be brought into the Criminal Court today, drew a large number of people to the court room anxious to catch a glimpse of the men. At 11 o'clock the Grand Jury, which was at that hour expected to be ready to present their indictments, announced that they were not ready to report. An adjournment was taken to give them time to consider the cases, and two subsquent adjournments were taken, the last one until 2 pm for the same purpose. At the latter hour, when Judge Normile took his seat, the court room was crowded, the spectators filling the aisles and doorways The Grand Jury filed in and took their seats, and the bills were handed to the judge, who after looking at them dismissed the jury.

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One of the bills was the joint indictments against Wittrock, Weaver, and Haight, charging them with larceny from a railroad car and robbery in the first degree. They pleaded guilty, maintaining all the while that Fotheringham was innocent.

The state attorney recommended that the extreme penalty, seven years in the penitentiary, be meted out to Wittrock and Haight and that Weaver be given five years. The judge then sentenced them in accordance with the recommendation. Wittrock and Haight took their sentences in stride, the former remarking, "We have made our beds and must lie in them." Weaver was seen to break down.

After receiving sentence, the prisoners were led to their cells, where they remained until the next day when they were taken to the state penitentiary at Jefferson City.

Frederick Wittrock, alias Jim H. Cummings, was received at the Missouri State Penitentiary on January 6, 1887. He received a seven-year sentence for larceny from a railroad. Wittrock entered prison as convict No. 6102. He entered the prison hospital on March 18, 1891, for causes unknown. A dim note in pencil indicates that he was either discharged or died on March 28, 1891.

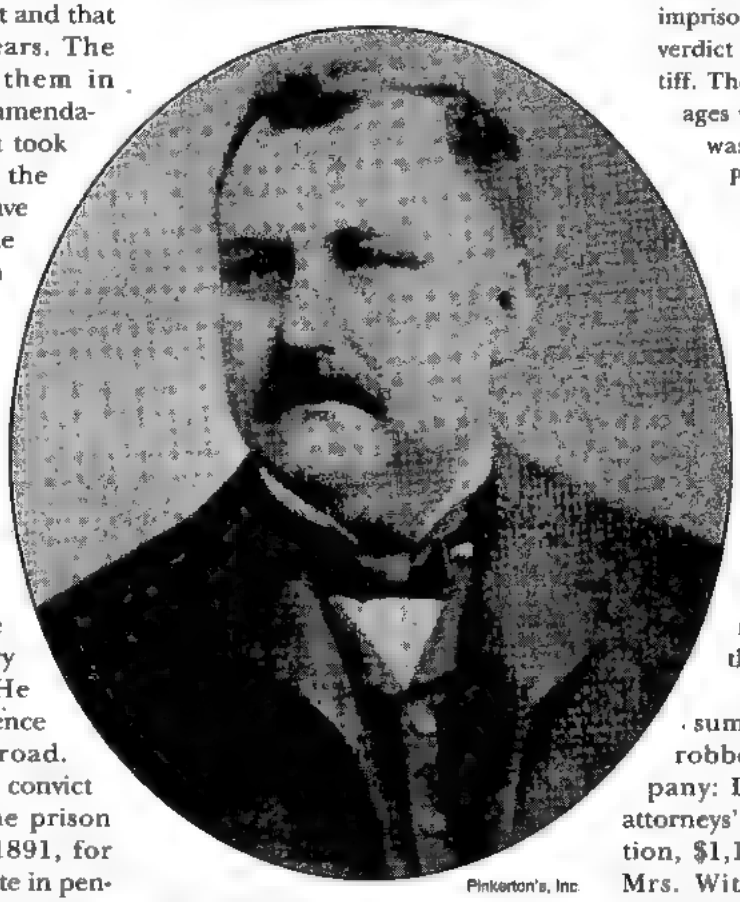
John Weaver is listed as Thomas Weaver in the old prison index. He received five years in 1887 for larceny from a railroad. Weaver was discharged October 4, 1890.

William Haight is listed as William H. Haight. He was received January 6, 1887, and sentenced to seven years for larceny from a railroad. No date of release is known.

Oscar Cook was received at the Missouri State Penitentiary March 22, 1887, and received a three-year sentence for receiving stolen property, no doubt from the railroad. Cook was discharged June 17, 1889.

Messenger David S. Fotheringham continued to maintain his innocence, and his case was set for trial May 1887, as reported in the press:

> St. Louis, May 2, 1887—The case of David S. Fotheringham, the messenger indicted for the larceny of $90,000 from the Adams Express Company, was called in the Criminal Court this morning Fotheringham was indicted jointly with Wittrock, Haight, and Weaver. They pleaded guilty, but maintaining all the while that Fotheringham was innocent. The messenger was confined in jail for several months, but was released on bond in February. There are two indictments against him, one charging the larceny of $90,000 and the other $30,000.



Pinkerton's, Inc.

Robert Pinkerton

Public sentiment was now running high in favor of the messenger. It was learned that the state's case was very weak, which finally resulted in all the charges being dropped against him.

In retaliation at being falsely imprisoned, Fotheringham filed a civil suit against Robert Pinkerton, W.H. Damsel, and the Adams Express Company, as was reported in the press:

> St. Louis, April 18, 1888 - The jury in the suit of David S. Fotheringham against the Adams Express Company For damages for false imprisonment today agreed on a verdict of $20,000 for the plaintiff. The sum asked for as damages was $60,000, and the suit was originally against Pinkerton, Dam-sel, and the Adams Express Company, but the detectives and the agents were dropped out of the suit.

The sum of $20,000 awarded by the jury was the full amount claimed on the first count of the indictment, that of false imprisonment. In the other two counts, for malicious prosecution, the jury awarded nothing.

An evening newspaper summed up the cost of the robbery to the express company: Detective expenses and attorneys' fees in the first prosecution, $1,139; mortgage raised on Mrs. Wittrock's house, $1,700; Robert Pinkerton and assistants, $10,000; Henry D. Laughlin, attorney for the express company, $10,000; railroad fares and other expenses, estimated, $15,000; money taken by the robbers and not returned, $12,000; verdict for damages, $20,000; actual cost to the company, $69,839.

David S. Fotheringham, the messenger who had protested his innocence from the start, and against all odds, came out of the affair as the final victor.

TOM THREEPERSONS
TWO LEGENDS OF THE WEST
BY JOHN R. ALBA

They were born three years and 1,200 miles apart and never met, yet they were enough alike to have been brothers. In addition to sharing the same name, the two men were tall and powerfully built, sons of ranchers, and handsome and heroic figures. Both favored wide-brimmed white hats and both were superb horsemen. Both were good with a gun and both died peaceful deaths, despite severe injuries inflicted on them by horses.

Tom Three Persons was born during a roundup near Standoff, Alberta, Canada in 1886. Three years later, Tom Threepersons was born in Vinita, Oklahoma.

The Canadian Tom Three Persons grew up in an era when riding wild broncs was a big part of Indian life. He had the deep set eyes and chiseled features common to the Bloods, a branch of the Blackfoot tribe. Three Persons today would be described as a world-class athlete. In his day, the term "top hand" was superlative enough.

He became a legend in 1912 at the first Calgary Stampede, when he rode an infamous bronc to a standstill and won the title "World's Champion Cowboy."

The horse, a black devil from Arizona named Cyclone, was already a legend. He had bucked off more than a hundred cowboys in his career and had earned the term "unrideable." During that first Stampede, Cyclone threw Clem Gordon, who was named Best All-Around Cowboy. On the final day of the rodeo, Cyclone met his match. Today's bronc riders are required to sit their mounts for eight seconds. Three Person's wild

Western Publications

Lawman Tom Threepersons photographed in 1920.

ride on Cyclone lasted more than twenty minutes.

The *Calgary Daily Herald* said: "Bucking, twisting, swapping ends and resorting to every artifice of the outlaw, Cyclone swept across the field. The Indian was jarred from one side of the saddle to the other, but as the crowds cheered themselves hoarse he settled every time into the saddle and waited for the next lurch or twist.

"His bucking unable to dislodge the redskin, Cyclone stood at rest and reared straight up. Once it looked as though Tom was to follow the fate of his predecessors. He recovered rapidly and from that time forward, Cyclone bucked till he was tired. The Indian had mastered him."

The Albertan gave this description: "When Three Persons settled in the saddle, took a firm grip on the halter rope and gave the cowhand's cry of 'Let 'em buck,' the crowd saw bucking as never before.

"Cyclone tried everything in the book. But he couldn't beat the Alberta Indian cowboy. Three Persons rode to a finish, rode into top prize money, rode into a niche in the hearts of westerners who will remember him as long as cattle graze in the foothills and cowboys ride after them."

Three Persons competed in many other rodeos, and according to the *Kanai News*, "he won virtually every rodeo he attended during his prime years." He is enshrined in the Stockmen's Memorial Foundation and the Canadian Rodeo Historical Association Hall of Fame. The saddle he won for riding Cyclone is on display at the Calgary Exhibition & Stampede and his picture is prominent in the Blood Reserve community hall in Standoff, Alberta.

After his moment in the limelight, Three Persons returned to the less glamorous life of the working cowboy on his family's cattle ranch. He married a Blood Indian woman named Lily and raised two sons. Again he did well, building huge herds of Hereford cattle and thoroughbred horses and amassing a fortune that made him one of the wealthiest Indians in Canada. When he died in 1949, the value of his herd was estimated at more than $80,000. His funeral was attended by businessmen, cowboys, Indians, sportsmen, jockeys, lawmen, and rodeo fans from all over Canada and the United States.

As thrilling as the saga of the first Three Persons is, the story of the Cherokee with the same name is even more exciting. Like his Canadian namesake, Tom Threepersons was an outstanding cowboy, though he was never proclaimed a world champion.

As a young man, the Cherokee attended Carlisle Indian School and played on the same athletic teams as the legendary Jim Thorpe. In the late 1890s, his father moved the family from Oklahoma to Montana, where young Tom worked as a cowhand on his father's ranch. Later, he drifted south and cowboyed on ranches in southeastern Arizona and rode in a few local rodeos.

When Pancho Villa staged his raid on Columbus, New Mexico, in 1916, Threepersons enlisted as a scout for General John "Black Jack" Pershing, who pursued the Mexican rebel leader into the badlands south of the border.

After the Mexican campaign, Tom stayed in the army and was stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas. His repeated efforts to volunteer for combat in Europe were stymied by his superiors, who placed great value on his skills as a horsebreaker. It was here that Tom received an injury that was to plague him for the rest of his life. He was kicked in the head by a horse and had to have a steel plate inserted in his skull. From then on, he was rarely seen without his trademark white Stetson.

In 1920, he was discharged from the army in San Antonio. From there he moved on to El Paso, where he served as a police patrolman and later as a detective. Here he had several brushes with death.

The first occurred in 1921, when Threepersons and his partner, Juan Escontrias, were patrolling an area called "Little Mexico," a haven for smugglers, drug dealers, pimps, prostitutes, and other less than solid citizens. Tom walked away from Juan to enter a restaurant and heard a curse followed by a shot. He whirled to see a dying Mexican in the dirt, a sixgun in his hand. His partner had heard the man shout a curse at Tom and take dead aim on the Indian's back. Only a draw nearly as fast as Tom's saved the lawman from the bushwhacker's bullet.

A few weeks later, the two policemen faced death again. Historian Eugene Cunningham, author of *Triggernometry*, quoted Threepersons' description of the incident: "...Juan and I fought a battle with some smugglers down on the riverbank. It was a nice fight, and when it ended and the smoke blew away, there were three dead men beside the river, and I had a bullet in my chest."

He recovered from the wound, and on June 10, 1922, he was appointed as a federal prohibition agent in El Paso. Being a "revenoor" apparently did not agree with Threepersons and around Christmas of the same year he resigned to take a job as manager of the Cudahy ranch in Durango, Mexico. The job title was a misnomer, as his real duties were to stop the cattle rustlers preying on the 15,000-head herd.

Despite his skills as a pistolero, Threepersons realized he was up against longer odds than he could handle. After several skirmishes with the rustlers and one running gun battle in which he killed two of them, he resigned and returned to El Paso.

By this time Tom had achieved quite a reputation as a soft-spoken man who never frowned and never shrunk from a fight. One incident fairly well wraps up the reputation enjoyed by Tom.

Chris Fox, who later became sheriff of El Paso County, was in the late 1920s working as a mechanic for a delivery outfit known as The Popular. One of the delivery trucks had stalled in an alley in downtown El Paso. Chris was summoned to repair the truck. When he arrived he found two men looting the vehi-

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cle. When Fox tried to stop them, they were joined by three other hijackers.

"They all jumped on me. It got a little tight, [then] I heard a stentorian voice in Spanish. It was Tom Threepersons, who lived nearby. He grabbed them and kicked and booted them around. They scuttled off down the alley. They would have killed me deader than a mackerel," Fox said. "Tom Threepersons saved my life."

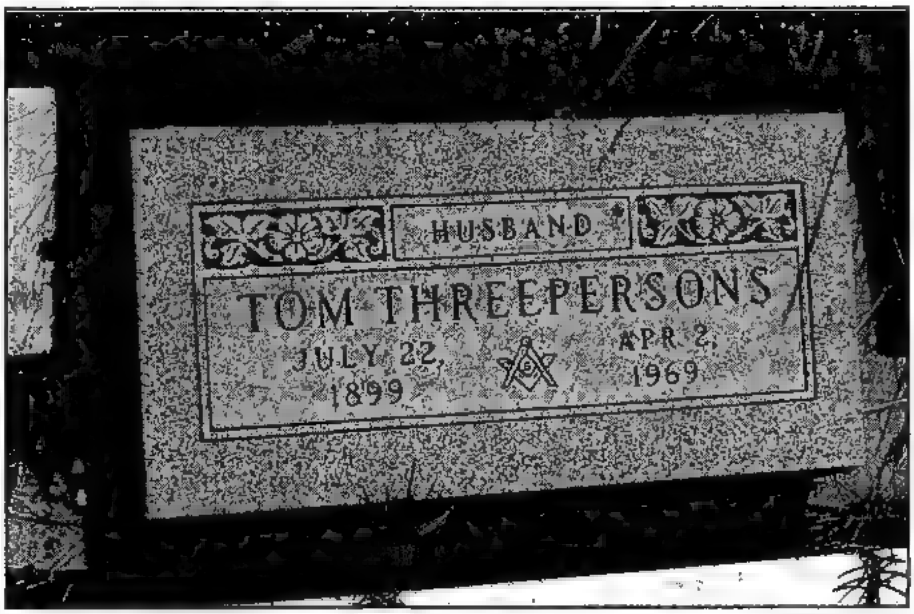
In 1923, Tom was appointed a mounted inspector by the United States Customs Service. During his two years of service, Threepersons fought several gun battles with smugglers and bootleggers, but one of his closest brushes came when he was run over by a bootlegger's car. His injuries, however, were not severe.

Another time, Tom and his partner jumped more than a dozen smugglers at the Rio Grande. A gun battle erupted with the smugglers opening fire from the Mexican side of the river. Threepersons fired all forty rounds he had for his .30-30 carbine then sent his partner for more ammunition while he continued the fight with his six-shooter. He fired the last of his 18 rounds from his revolver just as his partner arrived with more ammo, and a Browning automatic rifle! The machine gun put an end to the fight. When Tom and his partner searched for bodies, they found none—only numerous puddles of blood. The smugglers had carried off their dead. Shortly after this fight the smugglers placed a bounty of $10,000 on Threepersons' head. No one ever tried to collect the bounty.

During this time he befriended Sam Myres of the S.D. Myres Saddle Company (now the El Paso Saddlery Company) and had Myres make a holster to his specifications. According to Bob McNellis, now owner of El Paso Saddlery, Threepersons designed the prototype from a soup can and Myres executed the design in leather. The two men struck a deal. Myres would manufacture and market the innovative holster and pay Tom five cents for each holster sold. According to McNellis, Threepersons never saw a dime.

"It's a shame, too, because the Threepersons holster was the greatest innovation of gunleather and the most-copied design in the history of the West," says McNellis.

The rig, with its top cut away to expose the hammer and trigger guard, made Tom's lightning quick draw even faster. The design is still being marketed by El Paso Saddlery today.



Author's Collection

Lawman Tom Threepersons' headstone in Silver City, New Mexico.

At one time Threepersons was invited to Hollywood and offered a chance to go into the movies in a starring role in his own life story and receiving the princely salary of $700 a week. Tom turned the offer down cold, choosing to live real adventures rather than those on the silver screen.

In 1929, the old head injury forced Threepersons to retire from law enforcement. He worked as a foreman on several ranches near Silver City, New Mexico, during the final forty years of his life. In 1962 he moved to Safford where he died in April 2, 1969. He is buried in the Masonic Cemetery in Silver City.

No one knows for sure how many men died at the hands of this outstanding shootist. In 1929 Tom wrote a letter to the *El Paso Times* refuting an article by Owen Arnold claiming Threepersons had killed twenty men in the line of duty. Tom wrote, "I have never told a living soul as to how many men I have killed. That is an unpleasant memory that few officers like to recall....fiction writers go a little too far when they detract from a man's character and reputation when he has spent all his life trying to keep it above reproach."

Later, Tom wrote to *True West* magazine, after an article about him appeared in these pages. He wrote. in part, "...I have never had any desire to be placed in a class with Wild Bill Hickock, Billy the Kid, or any of the other so-called Western badmen. My desire was and still is to be classed as a respectable officer of the law and its enforcement. I did my duty to the best of my ability, as I was sworn to do, and that was all. I can truthfully say I never took advantage of any man that was under my protection, but treated him as my equal, as no man is guilty until he is proven so, and I was not the judge and jury."

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WESTERN MOVIE STAR PHOTOS–8x10 B&W glossy photos:

Most photos have star with gun in hand. **JOHN WAYNE PHOTOS:** 1. Three Mesquiteers (Terhune, Duke, Corrigan), 2. True Grit (sitting on ground with whiskey bottle), 3. True Grit (on horse with rifle and gun in hand), 4. Man Who Shot Liberty Valance (fanning revolver), 5. Spoilers (Scott, Duke, Dietrich), 6. Fighting Kentuckian (Hardy and Duke), 7. Sons of Katy Elder, 8. Angel and Badman, 9. Fort Apache (Duke, Agar, Temple and Fonda), 10. Undefeated, 11. Chisum, 12. Rio Grande, 13. Stagecoach (rolling cigarette and cradling rifle), 14. Early '60s (standing with rifle in hand), 15. Duke (standing leaning on rifle), 16. Rio Lobo, 17. Hondo, 18. Searchers, 19. Man Who Shot Liberty Valance (rifle in hand), 20. Horse Soldiers (waist up shot), 21. El Dorado (lying on ground with rifle), 22. Stagecoach (Duke and cast looking out of stagecoach–great scene), 23. True Grit (head shot), 24. Tall in the Saddle, 25. Red River with Brennan, 26. Searchers (cradling rifle), 27. Rio Bravo (walking with rifle in hand), 28. Horse Soldiers (with troops on horseback), 29. She Wore a Yellow Ribbon (great head shot), 30. Hondo–firing rifle, 31. Rooster Cogburn (lying on ground with rifle and revolver), 32. Cowboys (on horseback), 33. El Dorado (pointing gun), 34. Train Robbers (Taylor, Johnson, Duke firing rifles), 35. Red River (fight with Clift), 36. Red River (gunfight with Ireland), 37. Hondo on horseback, 38. Shootist (nice head shot), 39. Rio Bravo (shootout with R. Nelson). **CLINT EASTWOOD PHOTOS:** 40. Josey Wales (holding crossed Walkers), 41. Two Mules Sister Sara, 42. Rawhide (Clint and Fleming), 43. Pale Rider (nice head shot), 44. Fistful of Dollars (revolver in hand), 45. High Plains Drifter, 46. Josey Wales (pointing guns), **WESTERN MOVIE STARS:** 47. Gene Autry, 48. Gene and Champion, 49. Lone Ranger, 50. Lone Ranger and Tonto, 51. Wild Bill Elliott, 52. Bob Steele, 53. Alan "Rocky" Lane, 54. Don "Red" Barry, 55. Roy Rogers, 56. Roy and Trigger, 57. Ken Maynard, 58. Buck Jones, 59. Randolph Scott, 60. Tim McCoy 61. Audie Murphy, 62. Charles Starrett (The Durango Kid), 63. John Russell, 64. Joel McCrea, 65. Lash LaRue and Fuzzy St. John, 66. Tex Ritter, 67. Hopalong Cassidy, 68. Gabby Hayes, 69. Ben Johnson, 70. Lee Van Cleef, 71. Glen Ford, 72. James Stewart, 73. Alan Ladd, 74. James Garner "Maverick," 75. Hoot Gibson, 76. Charles Bronson, 77. Magnificent 7, 78. Gary Cooper "High Noon," 79. Clint Walker, 80. Henry Fonda, 81. Steve McQueen, 82. Cisco Kid, 83. Ronald Reagan, 84. Slim Pickens, 85. Warner Brothers Cowboy Stars (street scene pointing guns), 86. Bonanza Cast, 87. Gunsmoke Cast, 88. High Chaparral Cast, 89. Rifleman (Connors and Crawford), 90. Alan Ladd as Shane, 91. Fess Parker as Daniel Boone, 92. Big Valley Cast, 93. Bob Conrad and Ross Martin in Wild Wild West, 94. Guy Madison as Wild Bill Hickok, 95. Hugh O Brian as Wyatt Earp, 96. Broken Arrow, 97. Walter Brennan, 98. Zorro with Guy Williams, 99. James Drury as the Virginian, 100. Duke and Stewart in The Shootist. 101. Selleck & Elliot "The Sackets," 102. Butch & Sundance (running with guns drawn), 103. John Wayne (leaning against post with rifle "Rio Lobo"), 104. John Wayne (on horse "True Grit"), 105. Tombstone (all 4 stars walking to the OK Corral), 106. Tombstone (Kilmer & Russell on horseback), 107. The Wild Bunch (4 stars walking to final showdown), 108. The Magnificent 7 (various poses pointing guns), 109. Steve McQueen (pointing gun from Mag 7), 110. John Wayne-The Alamo (great head shot). 111. John Wayne, Dean Martin, Ricky Nelson "Rio Bravo." **New 8x10 Color Photos:** 112. Roy Rogers & Trigger. 113. Gene Autry & Champion. 114. Lone Ranger & Silver. 115. Hopalong Cassidy & Topper. 116. John Wayne "Hondo." 117. Clint Eastwood "The Outlaw Josey Wales" - pointing guns in street. 118. Clint Eastwood "Unforgiven" pointing Sharps rifle. 119. Tom Selleck "Quigley Down Under" - great chest up shot of him. 120. Lonesome Dove-Duvall & Jones. 121. Tombstone-Kurt Russell on horse firing gun. 122. Tombstone-Russell & Kilmer standing in street. 123. John Wayne "The Comancheros" - twirling rifle. 124. John Wayne "Rooster Cogburn" firing rifle in river scene. 125. John Wayne "Chisum" - opening scene on horse up on hill. 126. Elvis Presley "Charro." 127. Bonanza Cast. 128. Rex Allen & Koko. 129. Gary Cooper "The Westerner." 130. Alan Rocky Lane & Blackjack. 131. She Wore a Yellow Ribbon-Wayne & Ben Johnson on horseback. 132. She Wore a Yellow Ribbon-Wayne and Harry Carey Jr. 133. John Wayne "The Shootist" firing gun in bar scene. 134. Wayne & Mitchum "El Dorado" 135. Alamo-Wayne, Widmark and Tennesseeans on wall waiting for attack.

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MACE BOWMAN

October 9, 1844, Estill County, Kentucky—A son is born to Madison and Mary Jane (Breckinridge) Bowman. Due to religious influences upon the parents, he is named after an obscure Biblical personage. He is christened Theophilus Bowman, but he will go down in western history as "Mace" Bowman, one of several aliases he chose.

1850—In an effort to avoid the upcoming conflict of the Civil War, the Bowman family moves to Texas, establishing themselves in Titus County. They sympathize with the Confederate cause, although some members of the family maintain allegiance to the Union.

June 15, 1861—Theophilus Bowman joins the Eleventh Texas Cavalry, Confederate States of America, under the command of Colonel William Cocke Young. He rises several times that October.

December 15, 1862—Having seen action in Arkansas, Tennessee, and Kentucky, the teenage Bowman is discharged at Readyville, Tennessee, and returns to his home in Texas.

February 18, 1863—Bowman reenlists, this time in the Graham Rangers, and serves with the rank of second corporal in Captain C.R. Sutton's company. Their main work is acting as escorts and hunting down deserters.

1866—In Titus County, a former rebel captain, Bob Lee, is kidnapped by unionist Lewis Peacock and is forced to sign a promissory note for $2,000 in gold. Lee, tied to a tree to starve, is found by Bowman and rescued. He enlists Bowman's aid in the subsequent Lee-Peacock Feud of northeast Texas.

June 24, 1869—Lee is killed during an ambush and Bowman leaves Texas, suffering from at least one bullet wound, possibly more. He may have gone to Colorado Territory to recover.

June 14, 1871—Lewis Peacock is killed from ambush by three men: Dick Johnson, Joe Parker, and one other. Although unprovable today, Mace Bowman may have been the third avenger.

September 9, 1873—Bowman, using the alias "M. T. Mason," is sworn in as deputy of Las Animas County, Colorado. The alias may have been used to shield himself from possible reprisals from the survivors of the Lee-Peacock Feud.

December 27, 1873—John "Chunk" Colbert kills a man near Trinidad. Mason joins the posse to pursue him. The posse, after killing the wrong man, fails to capture Colbert. Mason serves as a deputy under Sheriff Casimiro Barela and his successor, George W. Thompson.

September 1875—Bowman, alias Mason, leaves Colorado after losing out to a friend for the hand of Sarah Hart. On September 16 he is appointed constable of Red River Precinct, Colfax County, New Mexico. He is known as M.T. Mason, although it is generally known that Bowman is his real name.

September 14, 1875—Two days before Bowman becomes constable, the Reverend Franklin J. Tolby is assassinated between Elizabethtown and Cimarron in Colfax County. This starts the shooting phase of the Colfax County War.

October 31, 1875—Cruz Vega, a suspect in the Tolby assassination, is murdered by a mob which may have included Constable Mason as well as the self-proclaimed "shootist" Clay Allison.

BY
CHUCK PARSONS

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MACE BOWMAN

TRUE WEST LEGENDS

Seated left to right: Clay Allison, Mace Bowman, Gus Heffron. Standing left to right: Frederick J. Stanton, William Raymond Morley.

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What To Read

Mace Bowman: Texas Feudist Western Lawman, by James S. Peters, with Chuck Parsons and Marianne E. Hall-Little. Hartmann Heritage Productions, Ltd., Yorktown, Texas, 1996.

"The Strangulation of Damian Romero," by James S. Peters. *Old West*, Summer 1983.

"The Untimely Death of Mace Bowman." *Old West*, Fall 1984.

"Sheriff Bowman and the Nolan Grant," in The *Quarterly* of the National Association for Outlaw and Lawman History (NOLA), April-June 1995.

Clay Allison, by Father F. Stanley. World Press Publishers, Denver, Colorado, 1956.

November 1, 1875— Juan Francisco "Pancho" Griego is killed in a gunfight with Clay Allison. Griego was suspected of having hired men to kill Tolby.

November 10, 1875—Manuel Cardenas, suspected of involvement in the Tolby assassination, is murdered. Again, Allison and Bowman may have been in the mob.

Mid-1870s—Mace Bowman and Clay Allison part company. Purportedly they were drinking buddies, as well as possible partners in several mob actions. Allison leaves Colfax County and returns to Texas. Historians have suggested Bowman told him it would be better for his health if he left.

June 15, 1876—Bowman is married to Jane G. Keene. The marriage will end in divorce in early 1880.

December 14, 1878—Bowman, no longer using the alias Mason, is elected constable of Precinct #6, Colfax County, New Mexico.

March 27, 1879—A quartet of hard cases, George and John Hill, Robert Leigh, and H. Gordon, refuse to be arrested and kill Deputy "Doc" Shores. Bowman, along with Sheriff Pete Burleson and John Allison, Clay's brother, arrest the four.

July 3, 1880—Another quartet of Texas cowboys upset the quiet of Cimarron. Sheriff Burleson and a small posse follow in pursuit. Tracking the group down, one of the cowboys attempts to shoot Deputy Robert Bragg. Bowman kills the cowboy, but not before Bragg receives a mortal wound. A furious gunfight between the lawmen and the Texans leaves the four cowboys dead. Their identities are never determined.

October 1880— Bowman arrests rustlers Thomas and Juan Lucero on charges of horse theft and in another case, recovers a child who had been kidnapped. After Bowman killed the kidnapper, a bounty is placed on his head by relatives of the deceased criminal.

Late October 1880—Bowman is challenged by three Mexicans intending to earn the reward. Bowman kills the trio. The episode is chronicled in Alfred Henry Lewis' novel, *Wolfville*.

April 11, 1881—In Mora County, Bowman arrests Refugio Maes for the murder of at least two women, as well as other crimes.

May 2, 1881—Bowman is married for the second time, to Andora Searcy, at Shafer's Ranch on the Sweetwater.

January 13, 1882—William Brocksmit, a young and popular newcomer to the county, is murdered. Damian Romero is charged and Bowman joins the hunt for the fugitive.

February 5, 1882—Romero is arrested by Deputy Pedro Sanchez. His trial begins April 5, 1882. He is found guilty and sentenced to hang.

November, 1882—Mace Bowman is elected sheriff of Colfax County, New Mexico Territory.

February 2, 1883—Sheriff Bowman officiates at the execution of Damian Romero. The event receives national publicity in *The National Police Gazette*, the "super market tabloid" of the nineteenth century.

April 30, 1883—Bowman and deputies deliver eight prisoners to the Leavenworth, Kansas, prison. It is among Bowman's last official acts.

June 3, 1883—In Trinidad, Colorado, Sheriff Mace Bowman becomes ill and loses his fight for life. Although some say his death was from natural causes (old wounds aggravated by tuberculosis), it is rumored at the time that he was poisoned. His death occurred during the "squatters' war" with the Red River Cattle Company. The same night he dies his cabin is torched on the land he had claimed for the small ranchers. No inquest is published and no one is ever officially charged with his murder.

Where To Go

Cimarron, New Mexico. While there visit the four-story Cimarron museum operated by Mr. and Mrs. Buddy Morse. It was originally a grist mill constructed by Lucien Maxwell in 1864.

Springer, New Mexico. The small museum here was once the Colfax County Courthouse. The gallows on which Bowman hanged Damian Romero was adjacent to the building. The noose hanging inside the museum suggests the hanging took place there, but in reality Romero was hanged on a gallows built just outside the courthouse.

In the small cemetery just outside Springer on US Highway 56 is the grave of Mace Bowman. Marked with a forty-one-inch high marker, the grave is occasionally adorned with flowers.

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Outlaws & Lawmen

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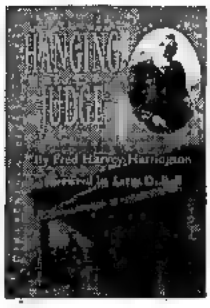

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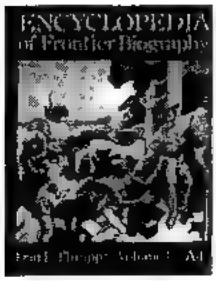

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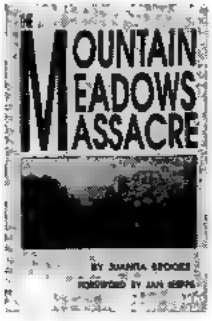

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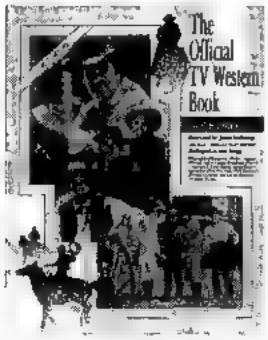

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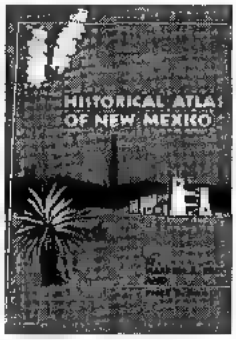

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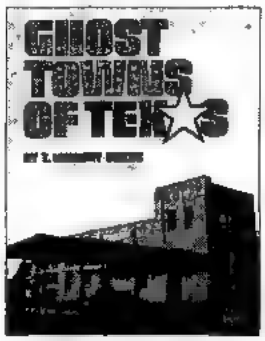

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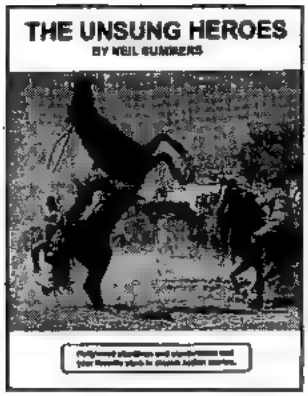

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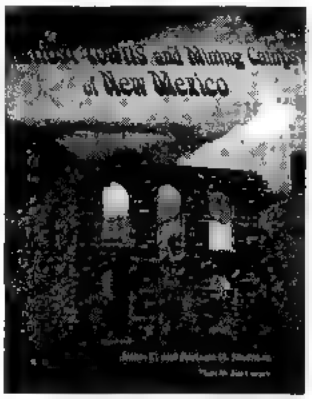

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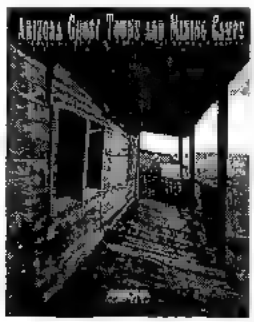

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Today, Napa Valley is practically one immense vineyard, almost as beautiful as the wild parkland George Yount found in 1836.

NAPA VALLEY PIONEER

by Richard H. Dillon

When Spain surrendered Alta California to an independent Mexico in 1822, it saddled the new republic with a huge headache, the province's *Frontera del Notre.* This northern frontier beyond San Francisco Bay stretched from the Pacific at Bodega Bay to the Sacramento Valley. At the heart of this border lay Napa Valley.

It is difficult to imagine California's beautiful wine country as ever being anything but a great garden, a vast vineyard of wall-to-wall grapevines hemmed in between the Mayacamas and Howell Mountain ranges. But Napa Valley, to the *Californios* of the 1820s, was a howling wilderness shared by savages and grizzly bears. And it remained a wilderness until George Yount tamed it in the mid-1830s.

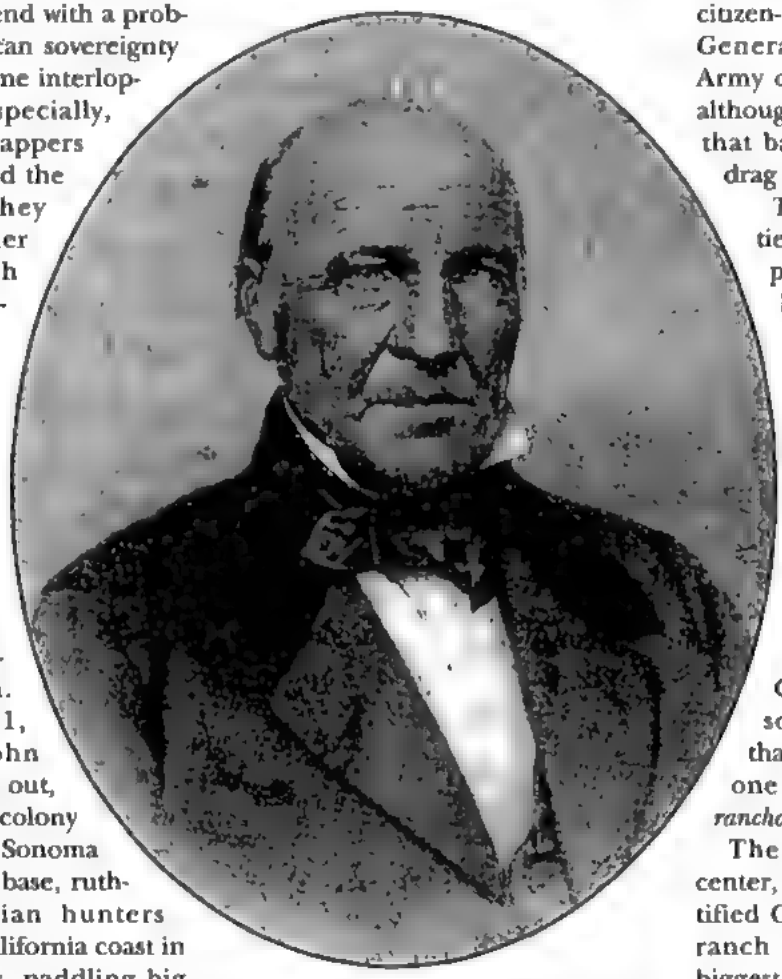
General M.G. Vallejo was commandant general of California, Mexico's most distant province. He was expected to maintain a defensive line on this northern frontier to protect settlements from an odd mix of potentially threatening forces. Before 1835 there was no fort beyond the Presidio of San Francisco. The only stabilizing influences on the bay's north shore were religious, not military, Missions San Rafael (1817) and San Francisco Solano (1823). Their Christianized Indians, called Neophytes, were numerous but, thanks to Franciscan teachings, were hardly militant.

They were certainly no match in warfare with their wilderness kin called Gentiles. Vallejo knew that he could hardly depend on the priests and their flocks for help in holding the line. And the tiny garrisons that he could spare the missions, a corporal's squad of men at each, did not prevent the wild Indians from raiding the mission herds of horses and cattle, killing converted Indians, and chasing *padres* all the way to San Francisco.

Besides the all-too-real threat from the Gentiles or savages, the general had to contend with a probable threat to Mexican sovereignty from other unwelcome interlopers. These were, especially, American beaver trappers from the Rockies and the Southwest. But they competed with other trespassers, British Canadian fur brigades coming down the Siskiyou Trail from the Hudson's Bay Company trading post at Fort Vancouver in Oregon Territory. Complicating Vallejo's worries further was the illegal presence of Russians in California. From 1812 to 1841, when Captain John Sutter bought them out, the Russians held a colony at Fort Ross on the Sonoma coastline. From this base, ruthless Aleutian Indian hunters ranged the entire California coast in search of sea otters, paddling big *baidarkas*, seagoing kayaks. They set up a hunting camp on Bodega Head, even one on the Farallon Islands off of the Golden Gate. The czarists expanded inland, too, up the Russian River and to Mount Saint Helena, towering above Napa Valley. All of these intruders, American, British, and Russian, were scornful of California's feeble military force.

Incredibly, General Vallejo had only one company of dragoons to defend the North, perhaps 100 men at full strength, that is, "on paper." Yet he boldly abandoned the Presidio to shift his troopers in 1835 to establish a fortified garrison town of Sonoma adjacent to Mission San Francisco Solano. His men were unpaid, poorly uniformed, and armed with smoothbore, short-range, and inaccurate *escopetas*, or muskets, not rifles.

The soldiers were poor marksmen, for Vallejo never had enough powder and ball to "waste" on target practice.



California Section, California State Library

In the 1860s, George Yount owned 13,000 prime Napa Valley acres and was cultivating 3,000 of them.

On the other hand, the general, a proven Indian fighter himself, had a secret weapon in his brother, Captain Salvador Vallejo. Although little-remembered today even in California, he was a brilliant, but brutal, Indian fighter. As for the militiamen he commanded, they were inspired by a strong loyalty to Don Salvador and, particularly, to the charismatic general, a real *caudillo* or military chieftain. Equally important, his men were part-time soldiers and part-time *vaqueros*. As horsemen, they gave nothing away even to Comanches. They were also the most skilled ropers in the world, using their *reatas*, or lariats, as weapons in combat. For practice, they lassoed grizzlies! In 1846 General Andres Pico showed the world what a natural cavalry these citizen-*soldados* were. They defeated General Stephen Watts Kearny's Army of the West at San Pascual, although they chose to use lances in that battle, rather than lariats to drag their enemies to death.

To hold his vulnerable frontier, General Vallejo launched punitive expeditions against hostiles. These forays were often led by his brother. At the same time, Vallejo patched together a makeshift system of frontier alliances that, somehow, worked. He anchored his defensive line on the west, his left flank, at Mission San Rafael and the Indian *rancheria* of Olompali. Chief Camilo Ynitia of the friendly Olom-pali Miwok Indians was so trusted by the Mexicans that the governor awarded him one of the very few land-grant *ranchos* ever given to Indians.

The general himself held the center, Sonoma Valley, with his fortified Casa Grande dominating his ranch at Petaluma, probably the biggest adobe in the West, and his pueblo of Sonoma, with its *torreón*, or watch tower, and barracks.

To hold the eastern flank, Vallejo won the fierce loyalty of a physical giant of the Suisun band of Patwin Indians—by whipping him in battle. Sem Yeto became a Christian, being baptized as Solano. He was so esteemed as an ally that he was considered to rank as an officer of the Mexican army, although he was called Chief Solano and even Prince Solano. It was up to him and his

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Suisun auxiliaries to hold his own Suisun Valley, today's Solano County, and a sort of beach-head in Napa Valley, the Suscol area near the mouth of the Napa River on San Pablo Bay. Above it the Patwins yielded the valley to warlike Indians.

After 1839, Vallejo's defensive line against wild Indians and white intruders was extended to the Sierra Nevada foothills as Captain John Sutter subdued the Sacramento plains from his New Helvetia, or Sutter's Fort. At first, Vallejo was suspicious of the adventurous Swiss, because of his open friendship with aggressive Americans, and resentful of him as a political rival. But, for the good of California, the general came to uneasy terms with him as an ally.

But there remained a critical space in Vallejo's border line, Napa Valley above Suscol. Early Americans called its Gentiles "Wappos." The term came from the Spanish. Today the word *guapo* usually means handsome. But in the 1830s, *"Los Guapos"* meant The Brave Ones. This name was a grudging tribute by Salvador Vallejo's troopers to the fighting skill of their deadly enemies.

The yawning gap in the northern frontier was filled by Lady Luck. Chance brought to Sonoma an ex-sea otter hunter named George Yount. He had no passport and was, thus, one of California's first illegal immigrants. But he had an ace in the hole, really two of them. He was not just a carpenter, but a skilled shinglemaker and roofer, to boot. Both capitals, Mexico City and Monterey, officially frowned upon outsiders. But even the governor and the commanding general welcomed individual foreigners, *if* they were "mechanics," that is, artisans of any kind. The Californians were skilled at only one occupation—cattle ranching. They were no more interested in industry or technology than the Indians. For example, when Yount arrived, there was not one properly-wheeled vehicle in all California, only crude *carretas*. These ox carts rumbled along on two tree-rounds in place of spoked wheels, making much more noise than progress.

General Vallejo hired Yount to roof some of his adobe buildings with new-fangled (for California) shakes instead of heavy kiln-dried roof tiles. Although there were plenty of redwoods in the Mayacamas Mountains between Sonoma and Napa Valley, Hispanic Californians were not willing lumbermen. They built few fences and no frame buildings, only *adobes*. The rub was that the buildings had to be securely roofed or, during winter's torrential rainstorms, the walls of adobes (sun-dried bricks of mud and straw) would, literally, melt back into the soil from which they had sprung. Until Yount arrived on the scene, there was not a single shingle in all California, except at Fort Ross.

The general liked the hard-working stranger who, with a single American helper, turned out 2,000 redwood shakes a day while using hand axes or hatchets. Yount had no froe, the special tool for cleaving shingles from blocks of wood. Vallejo quickly became impressed with Yount when he learned of his adventurous background. He had found a diamond in the rough. Father Quijas became so sure of Yount that he entrusted the Sonoma Mission to him during a month's absence.

George Yount was born May 4, 1794, of Alsatian German stock, on his father's Dowden Creek farm in Burke County, North Carolina. When the family moved to the unsettled White River country of Missouri, the young Tarheel received an "education," but no book learning. There was no school so, although intelligent, he remained illiterate all of his life, although, like Kit Carson, he was able to scrawl his name rather than making an embarrassing "X" on documents. But he learned plenty in Missouri—to stand guard over the family's cornfield; to be wary of marauding Indians; to hunt and to shoot. He made up for his lack of literacy by training a splendid memory so that he became a great raconteur in his later years.

Young George continued his apprenticeship as a future plainsman and mountain man by enlisting in the militia during the War of 1812 on the day after his eighteenth birthday. His father fitted him out with a good riding horse, a rifle, a tomahawk, and scalping knife. But a stern man, Jacob Yount sent his sixth son, of eleven siblings, off to war with more of a warning than a blessing: "Go fight for your country. If you are a coward, never come back again."

The young militiaman was disappointed by meeting no Britishers and being in on only a minor skirmish or two with their Indian allies. But he showed the first sign of his natural qualities of leadership and was elected a temporary lieutenant when his company deposed an incompetent officer. He profited from the example of militia majors Nathan and Daniel Morgan Boone, sons of the legendary Daniel Boone, and he studied a blockhouse at Cote Sans Dessin that had been successfully defended against Indian raiders by an old Frenchman and two brave women. "I never saw a place so cut up," he recalled. "The portholes were chiseled with rifle balls." Around Booneslick, Indians stole his horses, but he showed his mettle by overtaking the rustlers and recapturing the animals.

After the war, Yount worked on a farm, then devoted a whole year to hunting wild turkeys, deer, and bear, becoming an expert marksman. He bought at least two farms, but lost them to swindlers, for he was as naive about the legalities of property as Daniel Boone himself. He briefly became a cowboy (though called a drover in Missouri), driving a herd of cattle 200 miles up the Mississippi to Cape Girardeau. In 1818 he married fifteen-year-old Eliza Wilds and began to raise a family. But he allowed himself to be skinned out of his savings by a crooked neighbor. This led to a quarrel with his exasperated father-in-law and George angrily stomped away from his family. He probably planned to return or, at least, to send money to his wife.

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Yount lit out for New Mexico in 1826 as a teamster in a Santa Fe Trail caravan that was also joined by future mountainmen Kit Carson and William Wolfskill. Yount found trade in Santa Fe to be temporarily in the doldrums, so he joined a beaver trapping outfit at the Santa Rita copper mines. It was headed by Ewing Young, who planned to trap Arizona although it had just been opened by New Mexican officals and only to trade and game hunting, not fur trapping. Worse, it was infested with *Coyoteros*. These Apaches had robbed and chased away a first party of trappers during the previous season. Some of these men now joined Young: Sylvester and James Ohio Pattie, Milton Sublette, and Tom "Pegleg" Smith. But it was Yount, now known as Dutch George, who became Young's most trusted lieutenant. At that time, German-Americans were universally called "Dutchmen" by Anglo-Americans.

Young's party got off on the wrong foot, perhaps because George Yount was absent, trapping—and running from Apaches. The company killed Pima Indians in revenge for their massacre of Michel Robidoux's party of trappers. Ewing Young should have minded his own business. Robidoux's men brought disaster upon themselves by abusing the peaceful Pimas. Luckily for future travelers on the Gila Trail, they held no grudge against Young and remained peaceful, indeed hospitable, to whites.

Young split his party to trap the tributaries of the Gila and Salt rivers while he and Yount went down the Gila and up the Colorado River in dugout canoes that they had made of cottonwood logs. They found the Mojave Indians peaceful, at first, perhaps because they were still armed only with bows and arrows and in complete awe of the white men's weapons. "Lightning was to them no more formidable," Yount later recalled. "They thought the white man with his rifle was a conjuror dealing death anywhere, at his will...they thought that the rifle's range was infinite." But the Mojaves finally got up enongh nerve to attack the camp. Sharpshooters dropped ten warriors with just ten shots, and the remainder skedaddled for their lives.

Yount and the others returned to Taos via the hospitable Zuñi pueblo. They arrived hungry and emaciated after a desert diet of coyotes, porcupines, and their own dogs. Yount had plenty of fur, but Governor Antonio Armijo confiscated the party's pelts because Yount's hunt had not been licensed. Broke again, Dutch George went to work at William Workman's "Taos Lightning" distillery until he could organize his own twenty-four-man company for the fall 1827 hunt.

At the Colorado crossing, Yount intimidated the always-hostile Mojaves with a brass swivel cannon mounted on a mule's packsaddle.

Dutch George and his men trapped their way to the Colorado and a narrow escape from the Mojaves, who had massacred most of Jedediah Smith's party. Chief Cargo Muchacho, who had ambushed Smith, tried to trap Yount's party by inviting the whites to a fiesta and to enjoy the "female companionship" of a young Indian woman said to be Bill Sublette's captured squaw. The trickery almost worked, half-fooling even the vigilant Yount. But Hiram "Gabe" Allen smelled a rat, and after Yount temporarily held the chief hostage, he managed to extricate his men from the trap. Years later, he remembered, "the captive squaw would have doomed them all."

Yount led his men home past the San Francisco Peaks; crossing the Little Colorado at its Grand Falls. The Hopis and Zuñis were friendly and everyone arrived safely in New Mexico, though exhausted and nearly starving again. This time, George successfully smuggled his furs into hiding in a cache in Taos. He was thus able to pay off his debts and organize a new expedition. He led his men north to trap the Green River and Utah Lake country and to winter in 1828-29 in Bear River Valley near Great Salt Lake. It was one of the worst seasons on record, with snow drifts ten feet high. Yount froze both feet, but he lost no men.

A turning point in Yount's life occurred in the spring or summer of 1830 when he met Arthur Black, one of the survivors of Jed Smith's massacre. Black told him tales of mythical California. Since his wife was reported to be on the verge of divorcing him back in Missouri, George decided to head west rather than eastward as he had planned. He threw his small party in with Wolfskill's larger company and let the latter assume command as senior captain. Together they pioneered the Old Spanish Trail in its entirety. It took the name because the Spanish *padre* and explorer, Francisco Escalante, had used a more southerly version of part of it in 1776. Jed Smith had used some of it too, in 1826. But only Governor Armijo, as a trader, had preceded Yount and Wolfskill over its entire length from Santa Fe to Los Angeles, a year earlier.

At the Colorado crossing, Yount intimidated the always-hostile Mojaves with a brass swivel cannon mounted on a mule's packsaddle. At California's San Gabriel Mission Yount was welcomed by the priest, who was astonished by the accuracy of the *Americano* with his rifle. He suggested that Yount take up sea otter hunting. The technique was for hunters in small boats to shoot the swimming animals in the head, to spare their precious pelts. Before the otters could sink, *Kanaka* (Hawaiian) boatmen would dive in and retrieve the animals. At this work, Yount showed his skill as an artisan by designing and building a sort of Rocky Mountain bullboat to hunt in the Channel Islands off the Santa Barbara coast. He used the hides of elephant seals in lieu of

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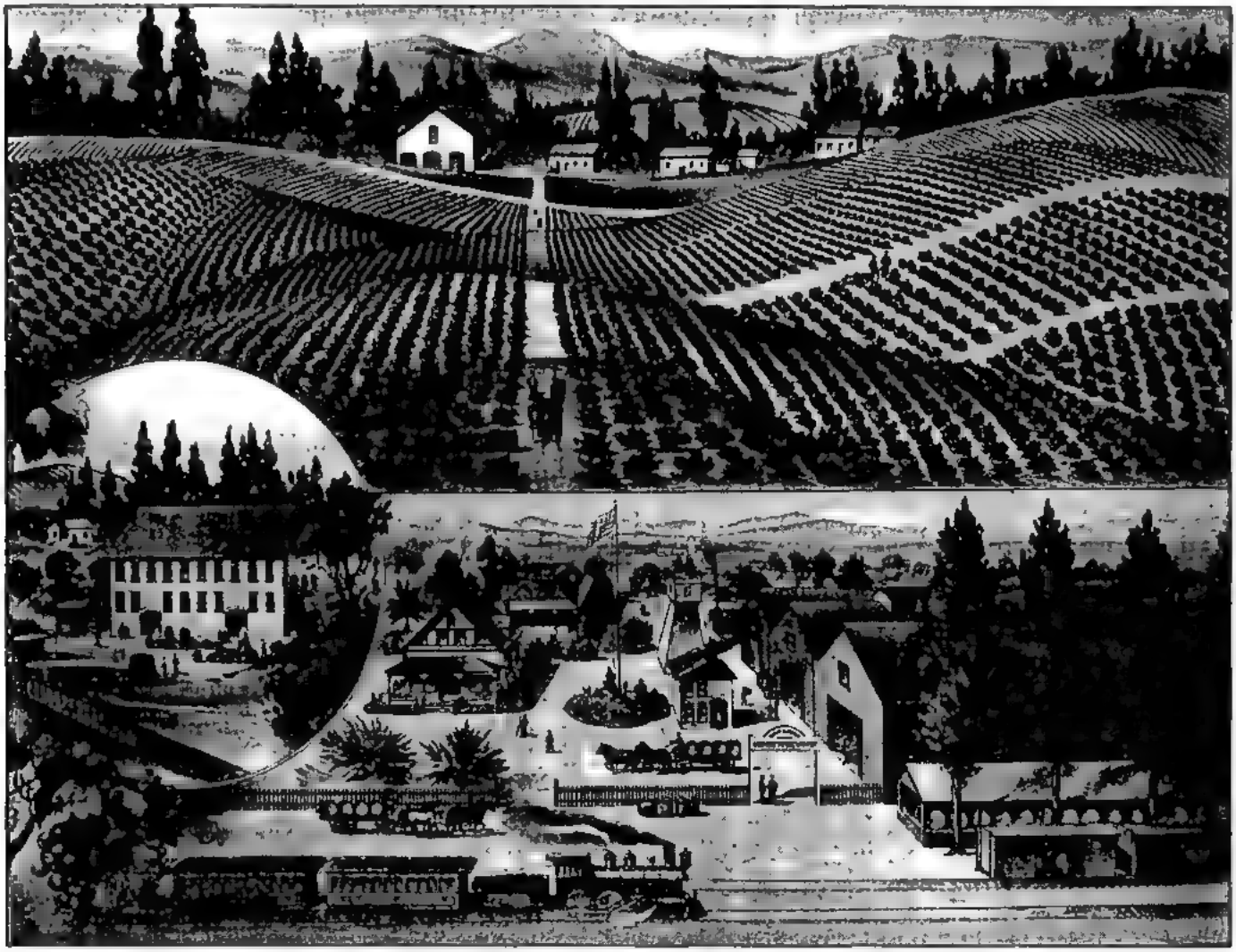

Wine Institute, San Francisco

By the 1860s and '70s, Yount's old cattle range was largely replaced by wheat fields, orchards, vineyards, and wineries.

buffalo skins. On the coast, Dutch George won a new nickname because of his garb, Captain Buckskin.

Captain Buckskin visited Northern California and was guided to a Napa Valley overlook on Mount Saint Helena, perhaps as early as 1831 but more likely in 1833, by an Irish drifter, Guy Fling. Family tradition had Yount saying, "This is paradise! It is here I would like to live and die."

But the time was not ripe and, instead, he took a partner, George Nidever, to hunt otter and trap beaver from canoes in San Francisco Bay and the Sacramento River Delta. Yount showed his compassion for Native Americans by rescuing a three-year-old Indian girl from an abandoned village. Her parents had apparently died of the great malaria epidemic starting in 1833. He tried to place her with other Indians, but they indicated that they would just throw her away, so he adopted the little girl. He had her baptized at one of the missions. She grew up and turned down several white suitors in order to marry an Indian, who later murdered her.

It was at this point that Yount turned shingle-maker. In gratitude for his labor, and to win Yount as a military ally, Vallejo got Governor Nicolás Gutiérrez to grant the American a ranch. Napa Valley would, thus, be a rarity in California, a region settled by an American pioneer before Hispanic settlers arrived. He was baptized at Mission San Rafael on April 19, 1835 as (*Don*) Jorge de la Concepción Yount, taking Concepción because it was the middle name of *Padre* Quijas. On February 23, 1836 he received the enormous *Rancho Caymus* of two Spanish leagues, 11,814 acres. He initially stocked it with 170 Spanish longhorns. By the 1870s, he was running 500 horses, 2,000 head of cattle, sheep, and 200 hogs.

In gratitude for his ranch, Yount joined the Vallejo brothers in the pacification not only of Napa Valley but of the whole frontier. In 1836 he marched with them against the Wappos who were terrorizing peaceful tribes of the Russian River Valley. In 1837 he had a narrow escape in a Pope Valley campaign against Wappos led by Chief "Hoter," who had stolen some of his cattle. This brigand was *Jota*, "J" in Spanish. Two horses were killed under Yount and the hostiles shot off his cap, but he was unhurt.

Yount soon had his revenge on the rustling chief. He was awarded a second grant, *Rancho de la Jota*, a Spanish league of the chieftain's Howell Mountains land, rich in timber for the sawmill that Yount added to his blockhouse-home and his flour mill.

Dutch George also joined the Vallejos and Prince Solano in pitched battles in 1838 and 1840. Both were at Suscol and both against Mokelumnes, or Horsethief Indians, raiding all the way from the Sacramento Valley or the Sierra foothills. Helped by their light cannon, the general and his aides whipped the invaders, both times.

At Caymus, Yount controlled Napa Valley itself from the first log cabin built in California. It was no ordinary cabin, but a Kentucky-style fortified blockhouse of two stories with loop-holes for defenders' rifles. The second story overhung the first so that Yount could fire directly down on the heads of attackers trying to break down his door. He was besieged in it at least once by Indian marauders, but he quickly won the allegience of the local Caymus band and by 1837 was able to replace his blockhouse with a proper California adobe.

As peace came to Napa Valley and the North Shore's Indian frontier, Yount settled down to raise livestock, but he also planted the valley's first grain crops, wheat and barley, on some 400 to 800 of his acres. He added fruit trees and berry bushes and started the valley's proud wine industry by 1838, using Mission Grape vines secured from Vallejo. But he let Charles Krug begin winemaking on a large, commercial scale in 1868. He was content with about 200 gallons a year. In 1859, Richard Henry Dana, author of *Two Years Before the Mast*, described his kindly host's ranch as a "principality."

Like Captain Sutter, Yount welcomed travelers to Caymus with great hospitality. Most were emigrants from the states, starting with the Bidwell-Bartleson party of 1841. It included old Missouri friends and one of them, Joseph B. Chiles, for whom Chiles Valley was named, went back to Missouri to bring out some of Yount's family. Among his later guests were survivors of the "cannibal camps" of the tragic Donner Party. In a much commented-upon example of extrasensory perception, Yount had "seen" these emigrants, in a dream, trapped in the Sierra snow in the winter of 1846-47. Naturally, he was one of many Napans who saw to their rescue.

At Caymus, Yount controlled Napa Valley itself from the first log cabin built in California. It was no ordinary cabin, but a Kentucky-style fortified blockhouse of two stories with loop-holes for defenders' rifles. The second story overhung the first so that Yount could fire directly down on the heads of attackers trying to break down his door.

Yount was torn by conflicting loyalties during the 1846 Bear Flag Revolt and subsequent Mexican War in California. But he managed to maintain a precarious neutrality, respected by both sides. Nor did he join in the Gold Rush of 1848-49, but threw his ranch open to disappointed gold-seekers.

Not until 1855, when his wife finally divorced him, did Yount remarry. His bride, Mrs. Eliza Gashwiler, was a good choice. She was well-educated and a far better businessman than her trusting new husband. She saved both ranches when powerful *rancheros* like the Vallejos were losing much of their land to squatters and their thieving cronies, "Philadelphia lawyers," or shysters. It was not an easy salvage; at one time Yount counted seventeen different cases of his pending in court against squatters.

Yount gave Caymus a graveyard, today's Yountville Cemetery. Unlike such Indian haters as Pegleg Smith, he showed his compassion toward Indians by reserving a section for his loyal Caymus Indian neighbors. And unlike such braggarts among his peers as Jim Bridger and Jim Beckwourth, Dutch George was reticent about his own exploits. He was so modest that he would not hear of white settlers naming their village after him. So it was called Sebastopol. After his death, it was renamed Yountville in his honor.

Jedediah Smith has practically been canonized by Californians as the archtypical mountain man. He was, indeed, the greatest at exploration and map making. But, compared to Napa Valley's "Daniel Boone," he was a careless leader, losing many men to massacres on the Colorado and Umpqua rivers before he was, himself, lanced to death by Comanches in 1831. He died with his moccasins on, only thirty-two years old.

In contrast, Yount progressed from farmer, drover, and militiaman, to beaver trapper, sea otter hunter, then to lumberman and sawyer, carpenter and shinglemaker, horticulturalist and vineyardist, and finally, a California *ranchero*. He never lost a man under his commands in the Rockies and Southwest. When he died, he may have had his socks on, but was bootless and in bed in his ranch house on October 9, 1869, at the ripe old age of seventy-one. During his thirty years in pioneering Napa Valley he pacified its hostiles with an absolute minimum of violence while winning the allegience of most of its Indians as he transformed a wilderness into an agricultural eden.

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Ben Lilly
American Hunter

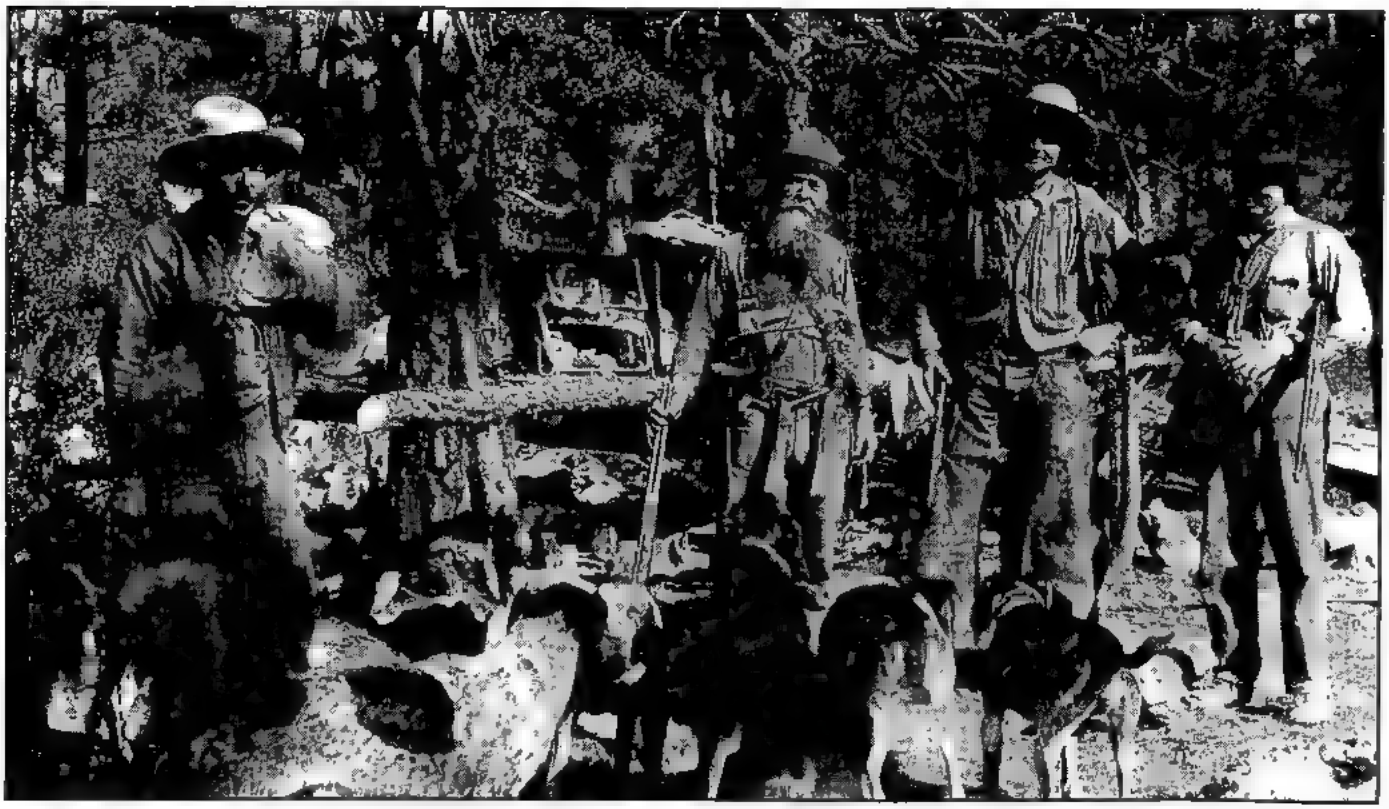
By John R. Sweet

Ben Lilly's wife asked him, since he liked to hunt so much, why he didn't go and kill that hawk that was menacing her chickens. Lilly took his rifle, walked out the door, and didn't walk back in for three years. "That hawk just kept on going," he explained. Eventually he would walk out the door forever. He was driven out of doors and into the wilderness by a passion that directed his fate and led him into history.

The lives of America's great hunters never cease slipping into folkloric myth. The real-life accomplishments of Daniel Boone or Bill Cody seem to become overshadowed by the tall-tales. Perhaps the greatest of them all, certainly the last of the great hunters, lies in obscurity, and what little that has been written of him describes a character so fantastic and colorful that it is easily dismissed as fiction. But the accounts are many, the facts are verifiable, and Ben Lilly stands as one of the greatest hunters and woodsmen that this continent has ever produced.

He guided an American president on a successful bear hunt. He hunted his way from the Deep South into the Southwest, swinging far into Mexico along the way. He grimly cleared the grizzly bear out of whole regions of the Southern Rockies, and thinned the mountain lion populations to the point where they posed no threat to domestic livestock. Ben Lilly lived in the wild with his pack of hounds, as wild and free as the animals he killed.

Lilly was well known to the few inhabitants of the Mogollon country of west central New Mexico and eastern Arizona. Occasionally he would hike with long strides into the ranch yards and town squares, his hound dogs around his feet and his pack piled high with the skins of bears and mountain lions, or "panthers" as Lilly would call them.



Author's Collection

Ben Lilly (second from left) in the Mogollon Mountains of New Mexico, circa 1920. Some of the legendary Lilly hounds are in the foreground. Government biologist J. Stokely Ligon is on the right, the rest of the group is unidentified.

Children would stare at this bearded, ragged figure, thin and sinewy but with piercing blue eyes and a friendly grin. He would collect the bounty and deposit it in the local bank, keeping a dollar or two to fill some old feed sacks with cornmeal, salt, and sometimes flour. Then he and the dogs would walk back alone into the mountains, their life's work unfinished.

Benjamin Vernon Lilly hailed from Wilcox County, Alabama, where he was born on the last day of 1856. Lilly came from a family of frontier blacksmiths and gunsmiths and was bred to a life of hunting and hounds. He moved to his uncle's farm next to the Bayou Bonne Idee in Morehouse Parish, Louisiana. There he developed a passion for hunting bears, "panthers," and razorback hogs. As years passed his ability became well-known, even in that region of plentiful game and experienced hunters.

He inherited the farm but spent most of his time in the woods and swamps, and his body grew tough and agile, his eyes grew keen, and his endurance surpassed that of his hunting dogs. The town marshal of Mer Rouge, Louisiana, claimed to have seen him, from a standing position, jump ten feet, six inches. Repeatedly folks have talked about seeing him knock dozens of waterfowl out of the air with a rifle, each bird shot through the head! Decades later western cowboys would tell of equally amazing feats of marksmanship. No one spent more time afield, or bagged more game, than Ben Lilly.

Lilly began to see the world, and his place in it, in Old Testament terms. The predators of the earth were destroyers, unwittingly wicked in their ways, and Lilly referred to them as "the Cains." He would not break the Sabbath with hunting or work, but relaxed by reading a battered Bible that he carried. If his hound pack had treed a cougar or "bayed-up" a bear on Saturday evening then they would have to keep it busy until Monday morning. Lilly, himself a hunter and killer, considered himself one of the natural family of animals. "A man has to be accepted into the family," he explained in later years. "You can't live with them and you can't hunt them if you aren't a member." It was a curious relationship that Ben Lilly maintained with his "family," to be sure.

In 1906, empty-handed, Ben Lilly walked into the Big Thicket country of east Texas. Bears and lions had grown scarce in his parts and his passion drove him westward. He had always been given to long hunting trips, anyway. This trip would last until the end of his life.

On Christmas Day 1906, he hunted his way into the wild Big Caney bottoms along the Gulf Coast. His bear hunts and eccentricities became legendary amongst the

Author's Collection

Ben Lilly on the GOS Ranch in New Mexico circa 1930, posing with his most valuable weapons: the Lilly hounds and a Savage Model 99 rifle.

local black population of the Old Ocean area, but a telegram came for him in the fall asking that he guide President Theodore Roosevelt's party that was assembling in the Tensas Bayou of Louisiana. The upper class hunting camp, with its swarm of people and dogs, was not to his liking, but Lilly and his hound guided the president onto a sow black bear and found bears for other members of the party. When camp broke up on the following Sunday, Lilly remained behind, but he resumed his western pilgrimage the next day.

In July 1908, Ben Lilly crossed the Rio Grande at Eagle Pass, hunting his way south into the Santa Rosa mountains in northern Coahuila. There were grizzly bears in Old Mexico, and black bears and mountain lions a plenty, so Lilly worked for the local gringo-owned ranches as a predator controller. He also sent hides and skulls of specimen animals to the Smithsonian Institute. He carried a .33 Winchester lever-action rifle, and its crack marked the death of many of the Sierra Madre's "sunburned grizzlies." Several of Lilly's long-distance bear hunts became the stuff of legend, legends fantastic enough to raise the suspicions of anyone. Anyone, that is, except for people that actually knew the old gentleman.

By 1911 Lilly had crossed into southwest New Mexico and had one of his camps on the Diamond A Ranch in the Animas Mountains. He cut the track of a two-toed grizzly and followed it south to the Mexican border. The bear was a notorious local stock-killer. Lilly knew that the big bear would be back into that part of its range in two weeks or so. He set traps and waited. The grizzly blundered into the trap, but broke the chain and began a long run into the mountains of Old Mexico. Lilly tracked the animal into Chihuahua, then over the Sierra Madres into Sonora, then back into Chihuahua. Many days later on a Saturday evening, Ben Lilly caught up to the bear as it was headed back into New Mexico. He was an old bear and his tusks were worn clear down to the gums.

By 1912 Lilly had a camp outfit of five hounds and five pack burros and was engaged in predator "bounty hunting" in the Mogollon mountains around Clifton, Arizona. For the next fifteen years Ben Lilly was trully at the peak of his career. In that rimrock and canyon country, covered with Ponderosa pines and scrub oak, mountain lions and bears existed in great numbers and plagued the local cattle operations. Lilly was universally recognized as the best hunter in the region, and his services were much sought after. He began to deposit fair sums in a dozen banks scattered throughout the southwest. He himself covered expenses by writing checks on pieces of aspen bark and old bones, these being honored without exception. He often playfully signed his name with a picture signature—"bee" V. "lily"

In the mountains he usually carried some corn meal and salt, a tin can for boiling, and a battered skillet. He abstained from coffee, tea, and spirits, but drank a concoction brewed from dried cherry leaves. Lilly kept these meager supplies cached in caves scattered all over the Mogollon country. Even when visiting local ranches, such as the NO bar in Arizona or the GOS Ranch in New Mexico, he preferred to sleep outdoors. He complained that the air indoors was "rancid." Lilly spent the entire year afield, hunting lions in the dead of winter while the bears hibernated. He and his dogs lived off of fresh venison and off of the lion and bears they brought to bay.

Ben Lilly also began working off and on for the United States Biological Survey in 1916. His knowledge and experience was highly respected by the young government biologists. When Ben Lilly was called in to a new range he climbed into the high country and spent hours on some overlook, scanning the terrain below. Finally, when there was anyone around to listen, he would point out the migration routes and game trails, and the feeding and bedding areas of the local bear and lion populations. Local hunters and trappers who had spent years working the area were astounded at his accuracy. Such was his knowledge of game that he could anticipate a predator's habits and know when and where to look for fresh tracks. He could guess when an animal was most likely to have made a kill and eaten its fill. That was the time to turn the Lilly hounds into the chase to bring the lion or bear, gorged on fresh meat, to a quick stop.

As well as a tracker of unsurpassed ability, Lilly was a legendary breeder and trainer of southwestern-style "big-game" hounds.

As well as a tracker of unsurpassed ability, Lilly was a legendary breeder and trainer of southwestern-style "big-game" hounds. His dogs were "cold-nosed" dry ground trailers, capable of following the faintest days-old track over the rimrock where no human senses could find sign. Their tough paws could withstand abrasive lava rock and sharp winter ice. Their toughness and endurance over long miles of rugged trail, and their ability to keep a bear "bayed-up," or a lion "treed," is itself legendary. Crook, one of the finest of the pack, helped kill 210 bears and 426 lions (by Lilly's own count) in his eleven years of life. Even today hunters in the region boast of having "Lilly hounds" in their pack's bloodline.

By 1928, when he addressed the American Livestock Association's annual convention in El Paso, Ben Lilly had seen his best days. His savings were lost during the bank fail-

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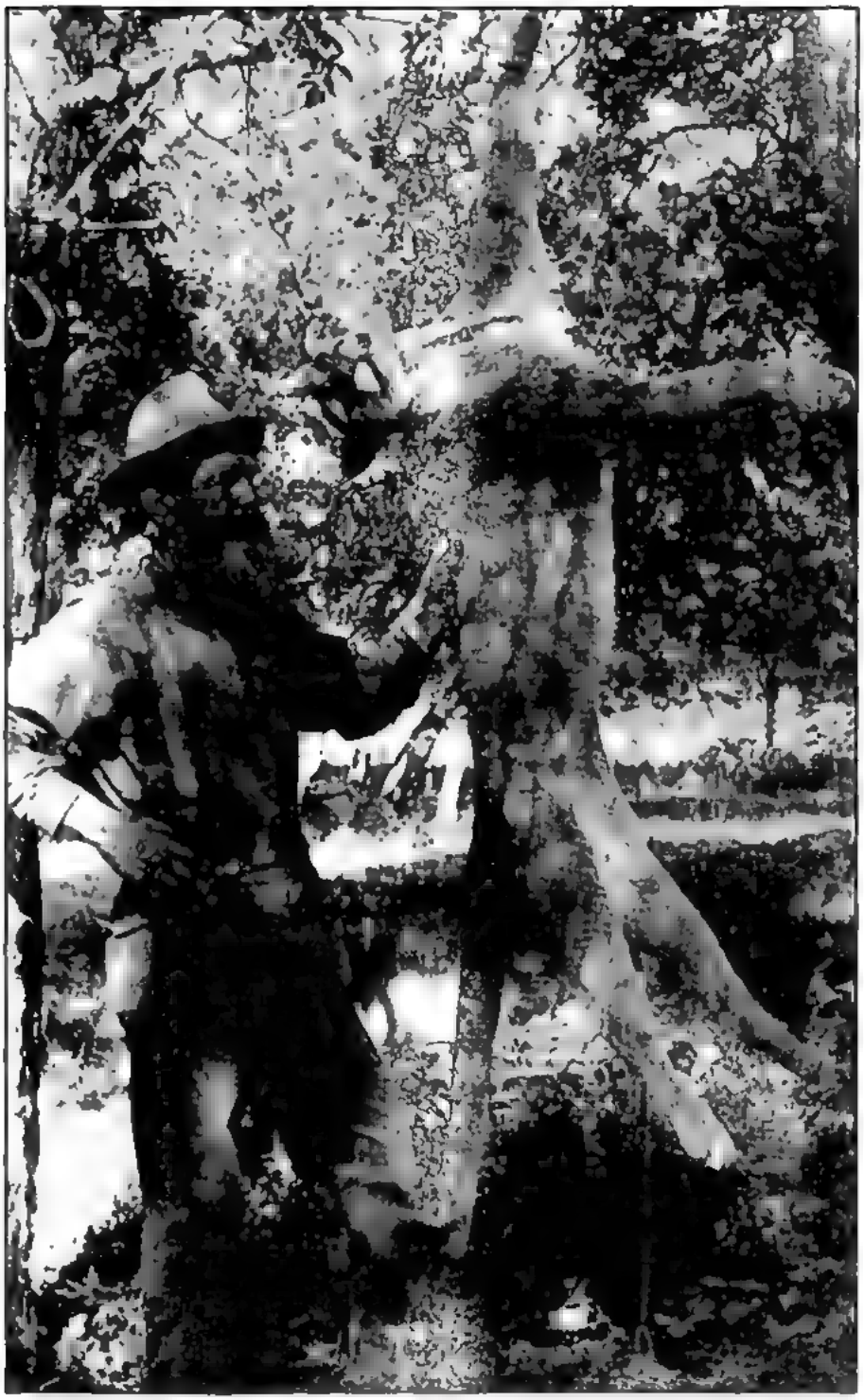
ures that swept the Southwest during the 1920s. Some said his mind was going, but "Mr. Lilly," as he was invariably known, was still respected as the most knowledgeable hunter alive. He made hand-carved hunting horns decorated with etchings of the animals he hunted. He forged the long knives of a hunter out of old files or wagon leaf springs. They were produced in camp using only rude tools, but they are graceful, utilitarian works of art. Those lucky enough to have received them as gifts treasured them.

He had some great hunts left in him, though. He was summoned to Chihuahua by Frank Sanborn, a Mexico City restauranteur. Sanborn wanted a crack at a "sunburned grizzly" and knew only the best hunter could track in the rugged Sierra Madre. Sanborn got his bear and Lilly stayed on in the hills, hunting for a track that would lead him into another adventure. He cut the track, that of a large roving male, and he and a pair of hounds followed it north. By the time he reached Animas, New Mexico, his dogs were sore-footed, and spent. He went on alone, following the sign by sight, over the dry Peloncillo mountains of Arizona and then north, past the town of Clifton and up into the White Mountains. For a month Lilly painstakingly followed each faint grizzly track, concentrating only on the large bear he had pursued out of Mexico.

Determined to close the gap that the bruin kept between them, Lilly hiked into Glenwood, New Mexico, and sent a message to the GOS Ranch near Silver City. Foreman Vic Culberson sent over some Lilly hounds that were being kept there. Lilly walked back up into the mountains and found the grizzly's bedding area in the Blue Range in far eastern Arizona. He turned his fresh dogs into the chase and ten days later the exhausted, thin grizzly was bayed up at the base of Mount Baldy. Ben Lilly grimly raised his .33 Winchester and shot him in the throat.

Lilly himself died on December 17, 1936. He died on the Grant County poor farm located on Big Dry Creek near Silver City. He had no money, no hounds left, some said no sanity either. The local ranching industry certainly benefitted from the work that he had done, and they were thankful. But did Ben Lilly ever look up into the Mogollon Mountains and wish there were some grizzlies left there? With the passing of those "Cains" came the end of his life's passion.



Author's Collection

A very rare photo of Ben Lilly with a dead mountain lion in New Mexico, circa 1915

Ivy Baldwin: Sky Walker

BY
JOANNA SAMPSON

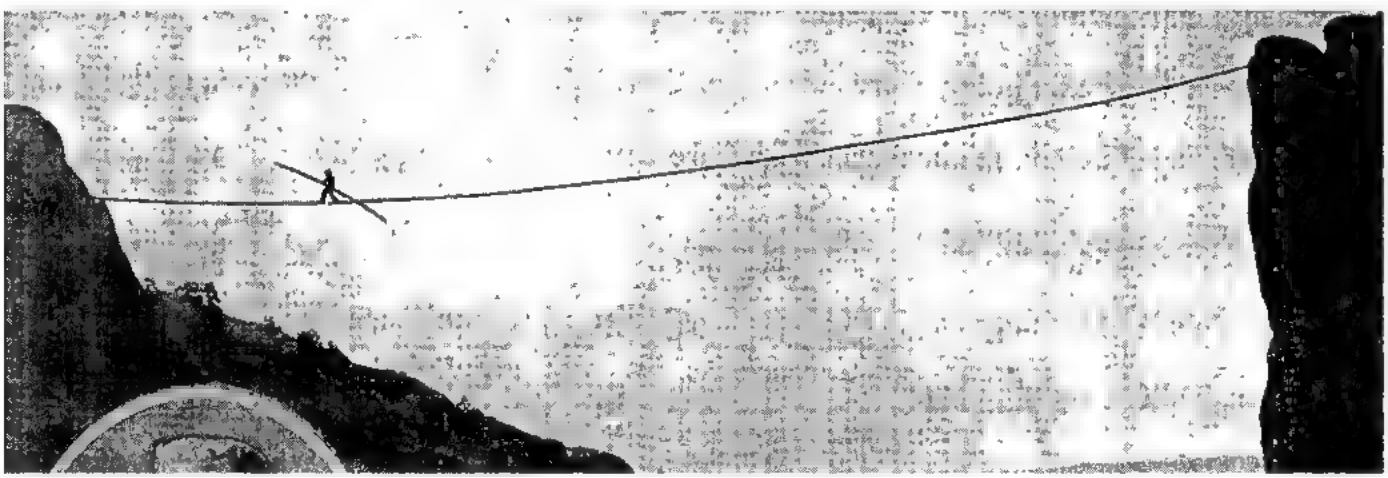
History buffs may brag about nerves-of-steel gunslingers, glorify the deeds of outlaws and Indian fighters, or praise the daring of gutsy mountain men who explored the frontier, but never was there a braver man in all the West than Ivy Baldwin.

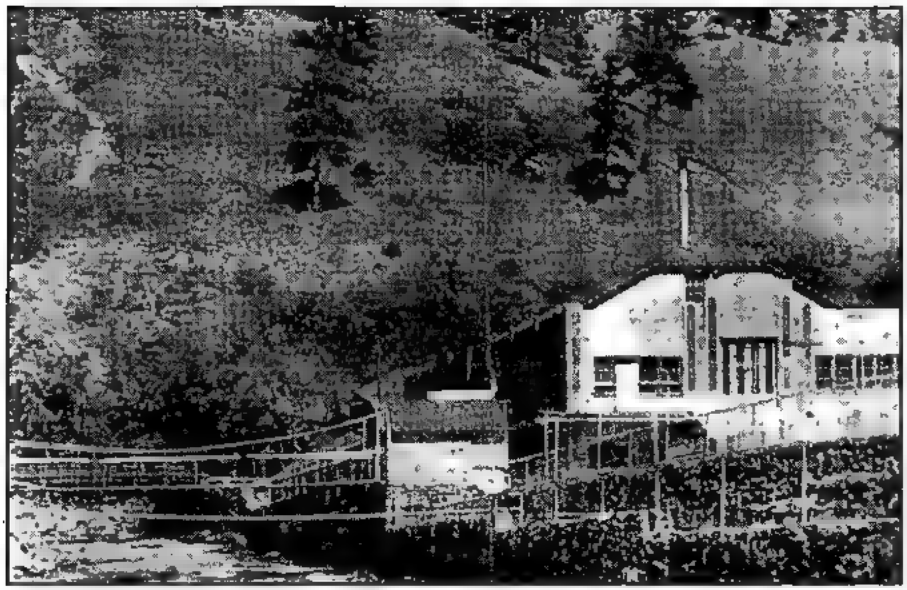
A bantam rooster of a man, five feet three inches tall and weighing 112 pounds, Ivy Baldwin ran away from home at age twelve, taught himself to walk tightropes, and spent his life as a circus performer, balloonist, trapeze artist, and tightrope walker. He performed all over the world, but his most famous feat was walking a 7/8 inch steel cable stretched between the great gateway rocks of Colorado's Eldorado Canyon—582 feet above the canyon floor and 635 feet across.

Eldorado Springs Resort was formed in the canyon at the turn of the century and is credited as being one of the first resorts built in the western United States. Geology and water are the attractions that lure visitors from all over the world. Sheer canyon walls and high mountain picnic spots provide recreation areas for visitors. Warm artesian wells in Eldorado Springs are renowned as some of the purest in the world. The water has filled various swimming pools over the years and swimmers flock to the canyon to enjoy the waters.

Ivy Baldwin, who loved the ladies, was hiking the canyon one day with the McGrew sisters, local beauties. On the spur of the moment, he told them he could string a wire across the canyon and walk it if he wanted to. Easy.

The idea, once conceived, grew





Author's Collection

Known as the "Coney Island of the West," Eldorado Springs was a breathtaking resort that featured Baldwin's high wire theatrics each week during the summer.

on him and he approached resort owner, Frank Fowler, with his plan to attract crowds to the resort. Fowler, knowing what would appeal to the public, supervised the stretching of a cable between the Bastille on the south side of the canyon to a point on the Wind Tower on the north side. No net was ever stretched under this high wire. Baldwin's first walk was made in 1907 when he was forty-one.

Baldwin told interviewer Forest Crossen, "I never had a teacher in tightrope walking. I was a newsboy in San Antonio, Texas, when I saw a man walk a rope. So I put up a wire across the San Antonio river. I made a perfect crossing. A circus owner saw me walk and gave me a contract. Before the season was over I was the best performer and did seven acts a day."

Ivy Baldwin was born Willie Ivy in 1866 in San Antonio, Texas. When he was seventeen he took the name Baldwin from the famous Baldwin Brothers who hired him to work with their troupe of acrobats, wire walkers, and parachute jumpers. He kept the name the rest of his life.

He traveled around the world six times, performing hot air balloon ascensions, walking tightropes, making parachute jumps, and diving from incredible heights into a net. On his first trip around the world he visited Japan where he advertised a high dive into a net from a tower 150 feet high. When the bamboo tower was finished, a delegation of polite Japanese men called at his hotel and pointed out that the tower was only 100 feet high. They waved his advertisement under his nose. The tower had to be 150 feet! So Baldwin added fifty feet to the tower, hoped for the best and made the dive. The Japanese emperor was so impressed that he presented Ivy with an embroidered silk kimono which Ivy treasured for the rest of his life.

In 1887, Ivy Baldwin walked a wire seventy-five feet above the main street in Wichita Falls, Texas. He had two men on the street holding guy wires to steady his tightrope. As he reached the middle of the wire he watched, in horror, a roaring drunk galloping at full speed down the avenue on his horse. Sure enough, the horse knocked down one of the men holding a guy wire and the impact caused the other fellow to yank the wire out from under Ivy's feet. Ivy broke four ribs and his ankle in the fall but stoutly maintained that he would not have been hurt if he had not landed on a pile of bricks.

Baldwin was a kindly and temperate man. He was light on his feet and moved with the strength and grace of a jungle cat, yet he never swaggered and he never boasted about his performances. He never down-played his skills either. It is said he was a flirty little man, loving the attention lavished on him by the ladies, and he was fond of children.

His round-the-world adventures sometimes landed him in dangerous predicaments. When he parachuted into the jungles of Java he was accosted by wild apes and had to scare them away with a tree branch until he was rescued. After he parachuted into head-hunter territory in Borneo, the natives thought he was a sky god and, instead of eating him, invited him to stay with them and become their priest. In Mexico he made a hot air balloon ascension and parachuted into a desert of bristling cactus. The natives stripped him, applied warm tallow to his body, and, when it had cooled, scraped him with a knife to remove the thorns.

Three balloons crashed and burned with Baldwin. He parachuted into San Francisco Bay one day and became caught in the chute lines. He barely managed to escape. He once survived the crash of a heavier-than-air, box-kite-like contraption that soared for a few moments in the high altitude air of Denver, Colorado, and then crashed into a tree, knocking him unconscious.

In 1890, he was hired by John Elitch, Jr., to make hot air balloon ascensions at the Elitch Gardens Amusement Park in Denver. Ivy was paid $500 for each performance. Elitch Gardens became his headquarters, though he continued to make appearances in distant cities.

Ed Haley, author, editor, and cartographer, recalls watching Ivy's balloon soar over Elitch Gardens with a trapeze slung under the basket and a long rope trailing from the trapeze. Baldwin would perform acrobatics on the trapeze, then drop onto the rope and swing dizzily at an altitude of about 1,500 feet which he calculated offered the best view for his audiences. Residents of

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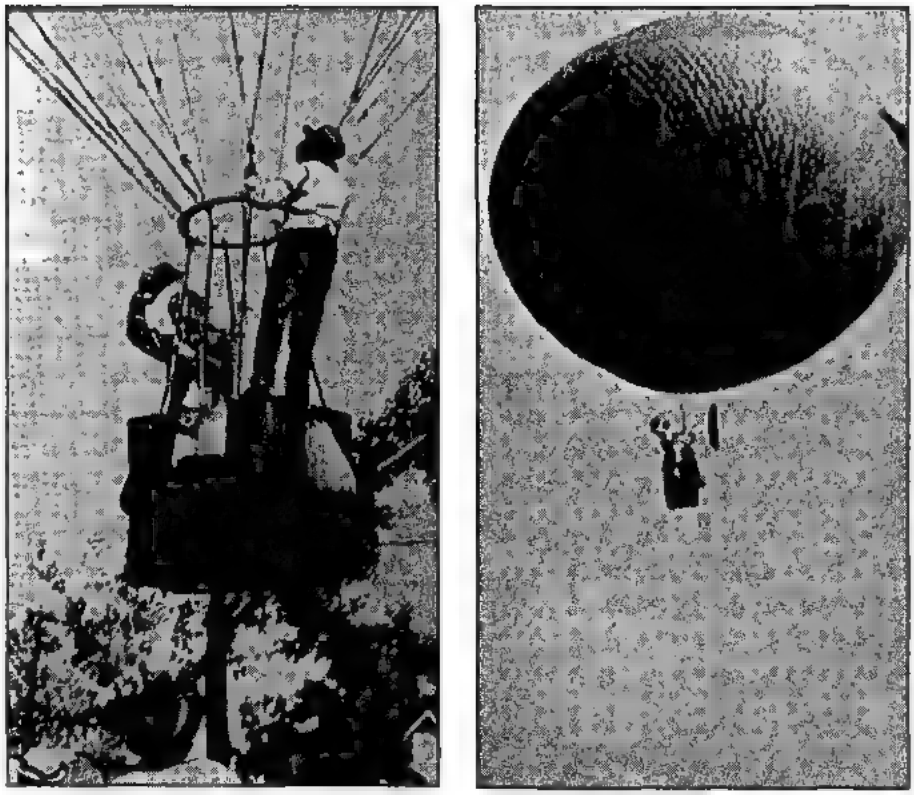
the city could step out on the front porch and watch Baldwin's "death defying" performances.

In 1898 Ivy enlisted in the United States Army Signal Corps and served in the Spanish-American War. At the Battle of Santiago, while riding in an observation balloon over enemy territory, he was spotted by troops on the ground. Hovering above them in his delicate balloon, at the mercy of prevailing winds, he became a target. Rifles began yipping at him like wolves closing in on their prey. They scored and shot down his balloon.

Baldwin walked away from that encounter and, years later, he told members of the Cactus Club in Denver, "I don't know that I have ever been real scared. I got a little bit white at the Battle of Santiago some years ago, but I wouldn't say I was scared. It was like being in a hailstorm," he explained. "Damaged the balloon some, but never touched me."



Boulder Historical Society

Ivy Baldwin with his balloon in Denver, Colorado, 1920. Baldwin would swing from a rope thirty feet below the balloon and perform dangerous tricks from the trapeze bar.

Gene Fowler, noted author and newspaperman, was a lifelong friend and admirer. He was also the stepson of Frank Fowler, the first of three generations of Fowlers who owned and operated the Eldorado Springs Resort. Gene Fowler spent summers at Eldorado Springs during his youth and says that Ivy Baldwin was his hero. He tagged after him like "a loyal spaniel," listened to his stories, thumbed through Baldwin's enormous scrapbook, and wrote down the wonderful accounts told to him by his hero. One of Fowler's favorite stories was of a walk Baldwin made in Baltimore.

"Well, it was a Shriners' convention," said Ivy, "and I was booked to walk a wire a hundred and twenty feet over the asphalt street. After I'd made the walk, I got pinched. The cops said there was a city ordinance that forbid any aerial act without a net under it. The judge fined me five dollars and said, 'Don't you try it again.' That night I went to the waterfront and bought me an old fish net. The next morning I laid the net flat on the pavement, and made another walk. When the cops got ready to pinch me again, I had the haw-haw on 'em. I showed 'em I had a net even if it wasn't a regular one and even if it lay flat on the pavement."

Before his first walk over Eldorado Canyon, ads were sent all over the state, billing this event as the "World's Highest Tightrope Walk."

Gene Fowler watched Ivy dress for that walk, saying Ivy readied himself for the performance "with all the care of a matador." He began by strapping a leather-covered guard between his legs. "I don't aim to fall," he explained, "but when a man falls, he must straddle the wire. First you let the balancing pole hit the wire, exactly in the center of the pole. That breaks the fall. Then you let your crotch hit the wire. And if a man's crotch ain't padded, then it's just too bad."

Ivy then donned a tight union suit, a short-sleeved white shirt and an old pair of trousers. To walk the wire he wore special camel-hide shoes which he said did not get slippery in wet weather. He carried the shoes to the top of the Bastille because hiking over the rocks cut the soles.

A large crowd gathered in the canyon to watch this daring act, many doubting that any man could actually walk that high wire. Ivy picked up his balancing pole, twenty-five feet long, and weighing a pound for every foot. He grasped the pole with his hands about two feet apart and with his palms turned outward from his body. The weights pulled the pole down on either side of him, down to wire level, lowering his center of gravity. A great silence settled over the crowd below as he stepped onto the wire, and with small, precise steps, began his journey across the canyon. When he reached the middle of the wire, he paused, lowered himself on it, and stood on his head! The crowd screamed their delight as he rose and finished his walk.

He walked that wire eighty-nine times during his life, and he improvised many stunts for his perfor-

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mances. He would sit in the middle of the wire and eat a sandwich or tie signs on the wire on his way across. Joseph Gabriella, lifelong resident of Marshall, a nearby coal mining camp, remembered watching Ivy take a container of canned heat and some pancake batter along with him on one walk. Out on the center of the wire he fired-up the heat, made pancakes, and flipped them down to an enthusiastic crowd. Then he packed up his high altitude kitchen and nonchalantly finished his stroll.

Not all of his performances went as planned. Treacherous winds sometimes caught him without warning as he crossed the canyon and when they did, he leaned far into them in order to maintain his balance. Spectators were sure he was a goner as he shifted his weight into the wind, but in spite of the bizarre sensation of watching a body in the process of falling, what the crowd didn't know was that the lean into the wind is what kept Baldwin on the wire.

One day a fierce summer storm caught him. Clouds were sweeping in from the west, winging into the canyon like great dark birds of prey hitchhiking the wind. Baldwin studied the sky, noted the ominous clouds, and decided to go ahead with his walk because he did not want to disappoint the crowds that had arrived on excursion trains from Denver to watch him perform.

He was on the wire when snakes of lightning began cracking and hissing on surrounding peaks. Thunder roared. Rain poured. Spectators watched as Ivy lowered himself on the wire and hung by his knees. He dangled from the wire in this fashion for over twenty minutes, waiting for the worst of the storm to pass. It took him an hour that day to complete the walk that normally required six and one half minutes.

In 1908, resort owner Frank Fowler had a set of "crazy stairs" built from the canyon floor to the top of the rocks where Baldwin's cable was anchored. Two little girls, Helen and Mona Kneale, daughters of sawmill owner, Phillip Kneale, usually ran up the stairs ahead of Ivy. They were friends and neighbors and never missed a Baldwin performance, despite the fact that their mother would not watch the highwire act because she knew Baldwin was going to fall one day and she did not want to witness that.

Colorado

The "Crazy Stairs" Ivy Baldwin climbed to his high cable.

"Ivy would go up the stairs with his camel-hide shoes in one hand, waving at the crowd with the other," says Helen, "and we would climb ahead of him. When he was almost at the top, we would race down an old railroad grade to the bottom of the rock because it was more exciting to watch him cross the wire from down below."

Baldwin was friends with all the local children. He taught many of them to swim in the resort pool and Eldorado Valley resident Julia Delier remembers, "he often made hot chocolate for the kids who were playing in the snow in winter or swimming at the pool in summer."

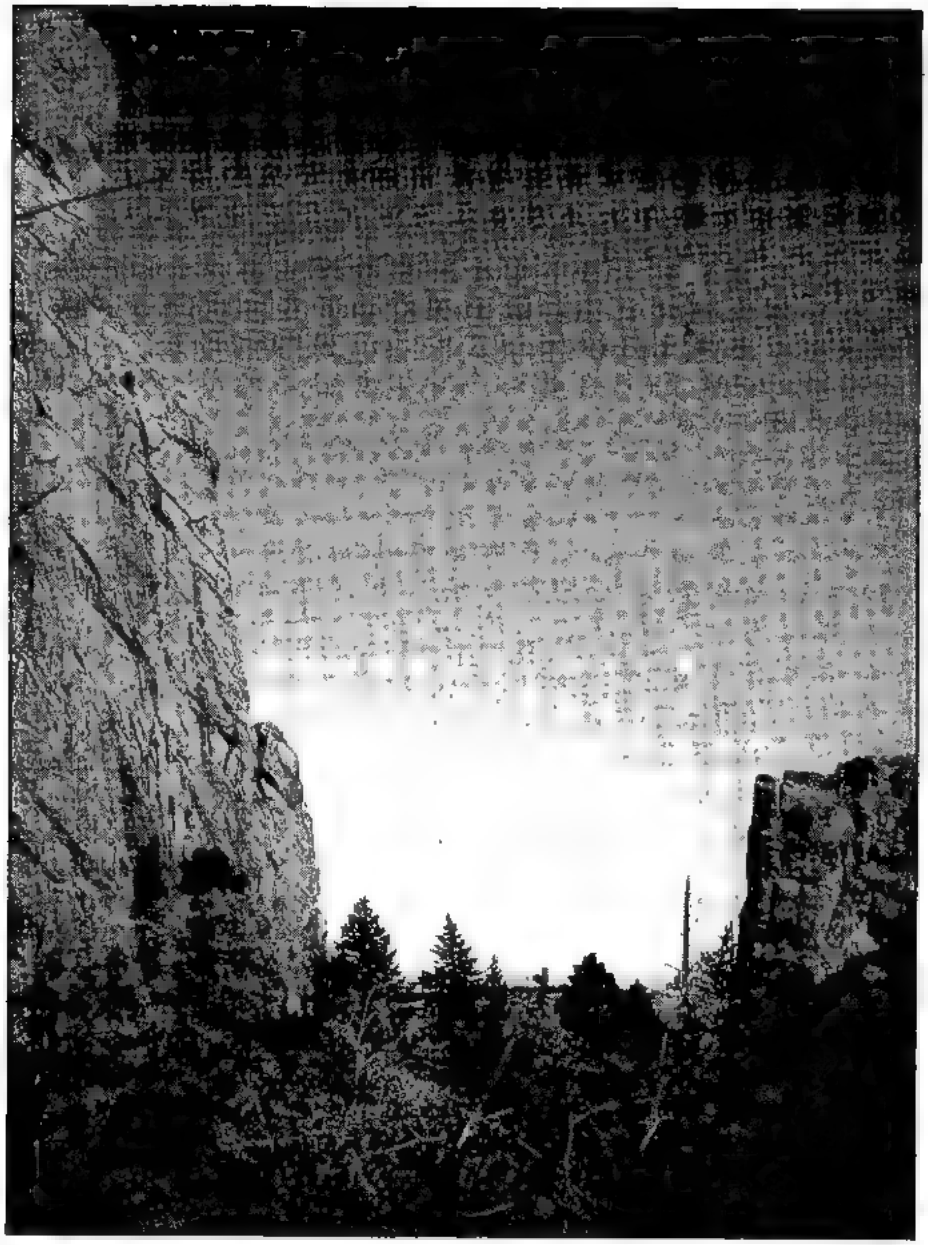
Laura Chesebro, long-time school teacher at the Hawthorne School in Eldorado Springs, told a group of friends, "I always vowed I would never watch Ivy on that wire again. It was too stressful! I would open a book on my bed and promise myself I would stay in the house and read while he crossed the cable." She shrugged and smiled wryly, "But when Ivy Baldwin stepped out on that wire, you couldn't take your eyes off him!"

For many years, Baldwin was the star attraction at the resort on weekends. Excursion trains brought scores of passengers to the canyon. Gentlemen in their Sunday suits and ladies decked out in long skirts and big hats adorned with bright flowers crowded off the cars to enjoy a day of festivities crowned with the famous tightrope walk.

In 1926, at the insistence of family and friends, Baldwin retired from walking the high wire. But as the years passed, he often expressed his desire to walk it again because his original goal had been to cross the canyon one hundred times. Jack Fowler, Frank Fowler's son who then owned Eldorado Springs, turned him down.

"I'd like to humor Ivy," Jack told a friend, "for I love the old boy as well as anyone. But I don't want to go to prison or be hanged for murder. And he's liable to sneak up here one day and get out on that wire before we can catch him."

However, in 1948 when he was eighty-two years old, Ivy badgered Jack Fowler into letting him walk the wire one more time. Jack



Author's Collection

The Gateway Rocks of Eldorado Canyon. Baldwin's cable was stretched from the Bastille on the right to the point of Wind Tower to the left.

refused to let him go up on the high wire, but agreed to stretch a lower wire 300 feet long and 125 feet above the creek. Ivy bluntly told anyone who would listen, "that's plain foolishness. You can get hurt just as bad at 125 feet as at 500!"

Nevertheless, the event was scheduled on the lower wire and 3,000 people came to watch Baldwin's last walk.

"I gave him all the receipts we got that day," said Fowler, "it was about $3,500, and even at that his daughter gave me the dickens for letting him do it. After he walked the wire, he walked over to the foot of the stairway and all the people came around him. I got an idea. I cut the big cake we had for him and sold it for a dollar a slice. I made them small slices too."

A videotape exists of that last walk. It shows the tiny, white-haired man climbing the rocks with the outstretched hands of friends helping him up the last few steps to the wire. He turns to face the wire...and then it is one gifted man and one slim wire as, with small, graceful steps he crosses into the waiting arms of well-wishers and admirers.

Ivy Baldwin was the second man in the United States to make a parachute jump, and one of the first to be included in the Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame. He died of a heart attack October 8, 1953, in his cabin at Eldorado Springs. Jack Fowler saw Baldwin start a fire in his cabin early that morning, reporting that on cold mornings it was Baldwin's custom to get up, start his fire, and go back to bed until his room warmed up. His body was discovered about noon by his son, Harry, when he arrived to visit his father. Baldwin is buried next to his wife, Bertha, in the Fairmont Cemetery in Denver.

Author's Collection

Ivy Baldwin's cabin in Eldorado Springs where he died in 1953.

Baldwin's cable no longer spans the mouth of the canyon, but to this day, the essence of the daring man on his high wire pervades Eldorado Canyon. Today's aerialists, the rock climbers, pay homage to him by calling his wire "Ivy Baldwin's 5.11 Traverse." Residents and tourists give him an salute every time they raise their eyes and look at the space between mammoth cliffs where Ivy once walked, or as friend Gene Fowler said, "where he performed against the blue roof of the world."

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REVIEWS

Buffalo Soldiers

The Black Infantry in the West, 1869-1891, by Arlen L. Fowler. (University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp Avenue, Norman, OK 73070. $12.95 paper bound.)

The Black Infantry in the West, in this reprinting of the original 1971 edition, is claimed to be a history of the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Infantry Regiments during the Indian Wars period. It is actually a social commentary on the treatment of black soldiers in the frontier army. The regiments themselves, and the individual officers and enlisted men who served in them, with the exception of the chaplains, are not the focus of this book.

Brief mention, which includes no biographical information, of the regimental commanding officers is made, along with a few other frontier army notables, such as Lieutenant Colonel William R. "Pecos Bill" Shafter of the Twentieth-fourth Infantry. The author fails to mention that Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie, of Fourth Cavalry fame, was the first regimental commander of the Twenty-fourth.

As noted, one chapter is devoted to the chaplains of the regiments. The black regiments, both infantry and cavalry, were unique compared to white regiments in having chaplains assigned directly to the regimental staffs. In addition to their religious duties, the chaplains, who were themselves black, were charged with educating the enlisted men and operating post schools. They "enjoyed" officer status with the equivalent rank of captain, but in reality, they were often shunned by white officers. The story of how these gentlemen managed to accomplish their work in the face of tremendous obstacles is interesting reading.

The chief criticism of this book is the author's obsession with recounting the hardships suffered by the black infantrymen on the frontier, and the blatant, often violent, racial prejudice they were subjected to by citizens, the army command (especially Generals Sherman and Sheridan), the War Department, Congress, and sometimes their own officers. He decries, over and over, that they served the longest tours on the isolated frontier and nearly always under the most primitive conditions, with inadequate rations and equipment. All these thing are true, of course, but the author dwells on these points excessively.

That such a condition of affairs existed is certainly regrettable, but the fact is it did exist in Victorian America, and applying twentieth century standards to nineteenth century conduct will not undo it, wrong though it was. This criticism of the author is the very reason this book is recommended. Despite his propensity to beat a dead horse, he does get his points across. The Buffalo Soldiers—a name first given to troopers of the Tenth Cavalry and later given to all black soldiers—were slighted, abused, discriminated against, insulted, and killed, sometimes even by their enemies. Through all this, they served with pride and honor, becoming some of the best troops in the frontier army and achieving records equaled by no white regiment. It took a new century and new attitudes to give them the respect they deserve. In spite of being repetitious, this book helps to do that.—*Terry W. Crouch, Tigard, Oregon.*

Ladies with Lariets

Cowgirls!, by Candace Savage. (Ten Speed Press, Box 7123, Berkeley, California 94707. $22.95 paper bound.)

The weaker sex? Not too likely, particularly when that title is applied to the countless, valiant, tough-as-nails women who, along with their men-folk, helped win the West.

Canadian author Candace Sav-

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age's extensive research took her on a long, looping trail from Calgary, Alberta, to Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, and Wyoming but she got her Western Woman.

Cowgirls is a big, colorful book of 144 pages, jam-packed with over one hundred photos, posters, and paintings, as well as dozens of pithy excerpts from the participants' diaries.

As the author demonstrates, while many eastern ladies sat in their bric-a-brac filled parlors, smelling salts in hand, women of the Old West unlaced their corsets and swapped side-saddle skirts for more daring but sensibly-divided garments. This done, they set to work helping at the round-ups, breaking colts, and raising their families in sod shanties and primitive log cabins all across the plains.

While some were business-oriented cattle queens, others in a hurry to succeed were tempted to turn to rustling, like Cattle Kate Averill, and paid for their midnight rambles by swinging from a rope. Those following the golden lure of gambling became royalty of a different sort, including Poker Alice, Lottie Deno, and the aptly monikered Madame Mustache. Their weekly take from bracing the card-playing suckers usually topped most male rivals.

Then in addition to the countless bar girls and fallen doves there were truly bad actors such as the hawk-faced horse thief Belle Starr, innocent-looking train robber Pearl Hart and those juvenile-delinquents Cattle Annie and Little Britches. This pair resembling outlaw groupies had their fifteen minutes of fame as companions and lookouts for the hard case Dalton Gang.

Nearly all Wild West women stuck by their men. Two of the most noted were Mrs. George Custer and Mary Jane Cannary, otherwise known as Calamity Jane. Libby Bacon Custer accompanied her dashing colonel from post-Civil War Texas to the wilds of the Dakota Territories while Calamity Jane hitched her wandering star to that of deadly pistoleer Wild Bill Hickok. Living as a free spirit, Calamity claimed to have been an army scout, wagon freighter, Indian fighter, and Wild Bill's Prairie Rose. But there's little doubt she was certainly a brawling boozer.

With the deaths of Custer and Hickok, Libby and Calamity spent the rest of their days keeping their men's reputations evergreen. Libby wove garlands of remembrance through her memoirs of wandering over the vast and empty land while Calamity spun her salty yarns from one cattle town and mining camp saloon to another.

But other women arrived as the years proceeded who became responsible for the apotheosis of the American West. Among the better known were Annie Oakley, also known as Little Sure Shot, of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, and the earlier and even more dashing Lola Montez.

In a natural progression, dozens of rodeo trick riders and sure shots arrived, continually portraying and expanding the legend of a never-never land sort of West. There followed a veritable stampede of movie westerns flickering across the silver screen which made the names of Jeanette MacDonald, Barbara Stanwyck, Jane Russell, and Dale Evans synonymous with that of the "Cowgirl."

Coming full circle at last, the brassy musical-comedy star Ethel Merman appeared as Annie Oakley. Here was a Hollywood-Broadway performer portraying William Cody's publicity-inspired Little Sure Shot—art imitating art—yet it helped to keep alive the spirit of the Old Wild West in the Atomic Age.—*Bill Garwood, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania.*

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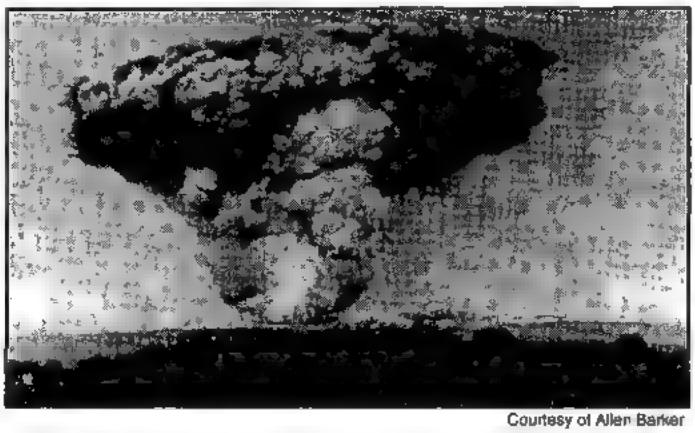
Answer Man By Chuck Parsons

Volcano!

Allen Barker, Pine Grove, California, took a break from working on his revised edition of *Billy the Kid Quiz Book* to write asking about a subject totally far removed from the usual Old West topics. Volcanoes! He sent along a photograph of Lassen Volcano, in California, erupting on May 22, 1915. Mr. Barker wrote: "I was six months old when this happened but safely in Arkansas. We bought 2-1/2 acres about 20 miles from the Lassen Park entrance a few years ago. How often do volcanoes erupt?"



Courtesy of Allen Barker

The Lassen Volcano eruption of May 22, 1915.

This is a far cry from outlaws, lawmen, frontier fighters, and pioneers of the Old West, but I found some interesting material about volcanoes in looking for this specific one. There is no single answer as it all depends on many geological factors, and some eruptions are barely noticeable while others are near cataclysmic, such as Mount Saint Helena in the state of Washington a few years ago. One reference to the main Lassen Peak indicated that there were "ten episodes over the last 300,000 years."

The famous eruption of Lassen Peak on May 22, 1915, actually was only a part of the volcanic activity during the years 1914-1917. "Mild vent-opening and crater-forming explosions persisted for a full year before the violent explosions of May 19 and 22, 1915...."

Apparently the last "eruption" worthy of note occurred in 1917. Scientists can only predict when a given volcano will erupt and with what force, much like predicting the weather!

Adobe Walls

Through e-mail and regular correspondence, David Bennett, St. Louis, Missouri, and I have exchanged information concerning the battle of Adobe Walls and some of its participants. His initial inquiries asked if famed Bat Masterson was really in this buffalo hunter-Indian battle, and if there was indeed more than one battle at that particular site.

Adobe Walls was actually the remains of William Bent's abandoned adobe fort near the Canadian River in what is now Hutchinson County, Texas.

There were two noteworthy engagements there. The first was on November 26, 1864, in which famed Kit Carson and men of his expedition held off about 3,000 Kiowas, Comanches, and Arapahoes. Carson had been ordered by Colonel James H. Carleton to take steps to cause an end to the Indian raids on wagon trains on the Santa Fe Trail. Carson's expedition to the site initially consisted of about 400 soldiers, scouts, and two howitzers. He had some infantry and a supply wagon train as well.

Early on the morning of November 26, Carson attacked the village of Kiowa Chief Dohasah, a village of some 150 lodges. After routing the Kiowas, Carson and his men took refuge at Adobe Walls as the area was filled with many more Comanches, Kiowas, and Kiowa-Apaches than anticipated. Having rushed ahead of the supply train and infantry, Carson retreated from the Adobe Walls fort to protect them on November 27. In spite of the retreat Carson lost only three men killed and twenty-five wounded, three of whom later died.

The second and better known Battle of Adobe Walls occurred a decade later as the initial engagement of the so-called Red River War. This battle began on June 27, 1874, when buffalo hunters were attacked by about 700 Cheyennes, Kiowas, and Comanches, under the leadership of Quanah Parker and Isa-tai. There were some twenty-eight hunters and one woman in the ruins of the fort when attacked in the early morning. The defenders were grouped in three different buildings, spread out, anything but the traditional fortress arrangement seen in so many movies.

The Indians were repulsed early and were forced to lay siege. The continuous booming of guns attracted more buffalo hunters to the area, and by the end of the fifth day there were about 100 fighting men in the Walls. The Indians were forced to withdraw.

Bat Masterson was certainly in this battle, the most famous of the fighters. Billy Dixon received much attention for his "miracle shot" which measured out seven-eighths of a mile, knocking an Indian off his horse. The whites lost four men. The Indians' loss is unknown; there were thirteen bodies on the ground but how many were removed by the Indians or how many wounded may have later died is impossible to ascertain.

The result of this fight was that it led to the Red River War and ultimately forced the Southern Plains Indians to reservations in what is now Oklahoma.

On the fiftieth anniversary of the

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second battle of Adobe Walls a red granite monument, bearing the names of the twenty-eight men and one woman who were there, was unveiled to commemorate the battle. Many old-timers were present who had hunted buffalo and fought Indians, one of them being Andy Johnson, the last surviving member of the men who fought in the second battle.

An excellent account of the 1874 battle of Adobe Walls is found in *The Panhandle-Plains Historical Review* of 1963, in an article by G. Derek West. More recently Bat Masterson's role in the battle is described by Robert K. DeArment in his fine Masterson biography from the University of Oklahoma Press. A description of the battle, its participants and the archeological dig appears in *Adobe Walls: The History and Archeology of the 1874 Trading Post,* written by T. Lindsay Baker and William R. Harrison, and published by Texas A&M University Press.

Jim East

"I would like to know when and where Jim East, the old-time lawman of the southwest, is buried. There are Easts in the Rose City Cemetery of Portland, Oregon." This question comes from Joe Herin of Prineville, Oregon.

James Henry East, one-time deputy of Pat Garrett when Billy the Kid was the prime object of their hunt, later sheriff of Oldham County, Texas, and later lawman and judge of Douglas, Arizona, died June 30, 1930. He is buried beside his wife Nettie Bouldin East, in the Douglas Cemetery. Thus the Easts of Oregon were not his immediate family.

East was with Garrett when Tom O'Folliard and Charlie Bowdre were killed. Too bad he didn't write his autobiography!

If you have a question, send it to Chuck Parsons, Western Publications, P.O. Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076. Please keep questions brief. Sign your full name and address, including zip code. Names and addresses will be published if possible. Space limitations may not permit us to use all questions. Due to the volume of mail, we cannot forward correspondence to people whose questions appear in "Answer Man."

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By Art Leibson

According to Damon Runyon, "Sam Dreben was the bravest, the gentlest, the courtliest man I ever knew. But beneath the velvet of his demeanor was the iron of a warrior soul. They called him 'The Fighting Jew.'" Nevertheless, no more unlikely hero ever arrived on the American scene. Short, speaking in a guttural voice, he landed in New York at age eighteen broke and looking for a military career. As a stopgap he took a job in an uncle's Philadelphia tailor shop. Within a few weeks he enlisted in the army and was shipped to the Philippines where the U.S. was fighting off an insurrection in the wake of the Spanish-American War. In the Philippine campaign Sam embarked on a military career that included three hitches in the Army, one of which included a tour of duty in China during the Boxer Rebellion. It was in the Philippines, however, that he drew the attention of a man who was to become a good personal friend and admirer, Captain John J. (Black Jack) Pershing.

During one of his enlistments, Sam became a machine gunner, a profession he practiced in a number of Latin American revolutions. As a member of Pancho Villa's celebrated Golden Guards, he was pointed out by Villa as the only American he trusted. But Dreben was also a chief scout for Pershing when he led an expedition into Mexico to capture or kill Villa after the bandido raided Columbus, New Mexico. In all Sam fought under ten different flags.

In El Paso, Texas, Sam made and lost a fortune in mining stocks before joining a local outfit at America's entrance into World War I. Dreben's valorous service in Europe won the Distinguished Service Cross, the Croix de Guerre and the Medaille Militaire. Returning to the United States, Dreben found his family and business badly disrupted but that didn't stop him from seeking high adventure across the Rio Grande in Juarez. Emerging from that conflict slightly infirm, he moved to California. There, while being treated by a physician, Sam received a wrong injection and his wildly challenging life of adventure ended at age forty-six.

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By Don Chaput

George Goodfellow was a medical professional, not only at home in the primitive operating facilities of Tombstone and Bisbee, but also in lecture halls and prestigious hospitals of San Francisco and Los Angeles. His medical daring-do and accomplishments led to appointments, such as the first Arizona Territorial Health and Quarantine Officer, chief surgeon to the Southern Pacific Railroad, and during the Spanish-American War, in Cuba, he was personal physician to General William Shafter.

For those familiar with Goodfellow's name, "surgeon to the gunfighters" is probably the phrase that first comes to mind. This he was, par excellence, for he performed surgery on dozens of gunshot victims, results of saloon brawls, mining claim affrays, or quarrels between dueling cowboys and townsfolk in Bisbee, Tucson, and Tombstone. He operated successfully on U.S. Deputy Marshal Virgil Earp, but could only watch as Morgan Earp died of gunshot wounds on a Tombstone billiard hall floor.

Goodfellow was always in the middle of action. When a literary society was formed in Tombstone, he was one of the founders. When new mining or ranching properties were being developed, Goodfellow was on hand as a participant or as a surgeon. He was familiar with every gambling hall in Tombstone and Tucson, and not as an onlooker. George drank, gambled, had affairs, and was occasionally involved in fist fights — once in a stabbing.

Although Goodfellow died a relatively young man, he packed into half a century the accomplishments of a half dozen individuals. He had a varied career, and apparently enjoyed life to the fullest.

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Feb. 1997 publication

Transcribed, edited, annotated, and indexed by Lynn R. Bailey

By 1883 the chronicler of Tombstone's turbulent years, George Whitwell Parsons, was no longer a tenderfoot. He was a knowledgeable mining man, savvy to the rigors and dangers of frontier living. His transition from San Francisco banker to diehard frontiersman is evident in his journals from 1883 until he left Arizona early in 1887. Here, for the first time in published form, is presented Parsons' struggles in Sonora, first trying to establish a quartz mill, then eking out an existence managing a company store in Nacosari, and finally plunging into gold mining in the nearby mountains which bankrupted him and forced his return to Tombstone.

Like Parsons, Tombstone was about to undergo adverse times, and fortunately George was there to record events. A rapid succession of calamities brought economic chaos to the town: mines were flooded, a bank collapsed, newly-installed pumping equipment failed, miners struck, and the price of silver fell forcing a shutdown of mining. If that was not enough, burning of the Grand Central hoist brought Tombstone to its knees. As George observed, it looked like the Devil had foreclosed.

There is more in this journal than just Tombstone's tribulations. Parsons gives his personal views upon Apache raiding, the merits of George Crook versus Nelson Miles. He was on hand to witness the introduction of heliograph to military operations and watched as members of Geronimo's band straggled toward Fort Bowie. His account of events along the Sonoran border, ranching activities in the Sulphur Spring Valley, and mining at Arivaca are incomparable. If you have Parsons' earlier journal you'll want this volume. This book is designed as a companion volume to *A Tenderfoot in Tombstone*, 6 x 9-inch format, 275 pages, printed endsheets and dust jacket in color. Augmenting the text are two interviews of George Parsons relative to events transpiring in the journal. As this edition is limited to 750 copies we suggest you reserve your's now. **Price: $36.95**

BOSQUE REDONDO: The Navajo Internment at Fort Sumner, New Mexico, 1863-68

March 1997 publication

By Lynn R. Bailey

The scorched earth policy of General James H. Carleton and Kit Carson destroyed Navajo subsistence, broke up family units, and brought quick results. Within months more than 8,000 Indians had surrendered to be carted and marched to Fort Sumner upon the Pecos River in east-central New Mexico. There, upon a forty mile square reserve known as Bosque Redondo, tribesmen lived for nearly five years. From 1863 until 1868 they obeyed military dictates as Carleton attempted to alter social structure and train tribesmen to live and interact like Pueblo peoples. However, this pastoral people, who had lived for generations in family groups, possessed no patterns for communal living on the scale envisioned by the military. The result was that regimentation created social stress that manifested itself in numerous ways, ranging from physical conflict among tribesmen, abandonment of the reservation by some Indians, and escapism through the practice of witchcraft. Adding to the pain of social upheaval and isolation, the Navajos suffered disease and starvation, as well as from raids by Plains Indians. In the end, the entire experiment collapsed and the Navajos pleaded to be returned to their homeland.

From voluminous records of the U.S. Army and the Office of Indian Affairs, Mr. Bailey has drawn the documentation to detail a fascinating period of Navajo history. He does not stop there; reasons for the success of the Carleton-Carson campaign are presented, the several routes of the so-called Long Walk are traced, and social upheaval at Bosque Redondo is explored in light of current knowledge, as is army and civilian ineptitude, and the struggle between military leaders and Office of Indian Affairs officials for control of Indian policy. This attractive hard cover book is produced in 5½ x 8½-inch format, contains 275 pages, 20 photos, maps and diagrams, notes, bibliography, and index. Dust jacket in color. Edition limited to 1,000 copies. **Price: $26.95**

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A Lost Corner of Boothill

BY MORT ALPER

Most people know that the Boothill Graveyard, in Tombstone, Arizona, is the final resting place of some of the West's most notorious characters. Among them are Billy Clanton and Frank and Tom McLaury, who, with the Earps and Doc Holliday, were participants in the famous shootout at the OK Corral. Other notables buried there include Billy Claiborne, China Mary, Dutch Annie, and Red River Tom. All lie under rocky graves.

Carved wooden crosses, sunbleached under the cloudless sky, bear the names and causes of death of the buried. There are 250 graves of those who died in bed, as well as burial plots of 180 desperadoes. Many of the latter were killed in gun battles, some committed suicide, and others were hanged. One unlucky man's grave site bears the apologetic inscription, "Hanged by mistake."

What isn't well-known is that beyond the main burial area, at the bottom of a gravelly hill covered with desert scrub and catclaw cactus, a section of the cemetery had been set aside for Jews. Another distant section was intended for the Chinese dead.

Boothill was established in 1879. During the hectic siver rush in the

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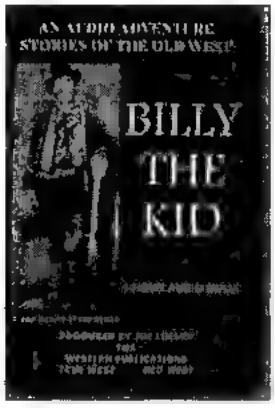

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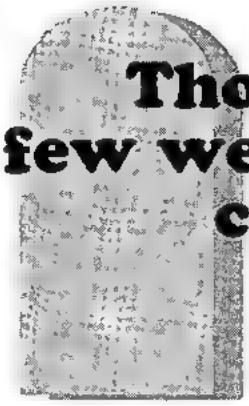

Though th few were aw cemete

1880s, Tombstone reached a population of 6,000. The cemetery was closed in 1884, not due to a shortage of bullets but because it had become full. Though thousands have visited the site, few were aware that an abandoned Jewish cemetery existed in the far northeast corner.

In 1982, a local historian, Al Turner, invited some Jewish friends from Maryland, Israel Rubin and his family, to see the site. Accompanying them was Judge C. Lawrence Huerta, a Yaqui Indian from Tucson who had served as a member of the Arizona industrial commission.

At the time, the only visible remains of the 2,500-square-foot burial grounds was a four-foot high crumbling adobe wall. For more than one hundred years this section had generally gone unnoticed. No gravestones remained.

The group stood quietly while Rubin recited the traditional kaddish prayer for the dead at the abandoned site. Huerta was so moved by the moment of remembrance that he made plans to restore the graveyard in honor of those who lay there.

"I'm an American Indian," he said later, "who spent years in Washington working on behalf of my people. There the Rubin family made me part of them. A burial place is sacred to my people, and I wanted this place to be treated with the respect it once had. In honoring my Jewish brothers I feel I am also honoring the lost and forgotten bones of my own people who lay where they fell when the West was being settled."

In March of 1983, after the Tombstone city council approved Huerta's restoration efforts, the

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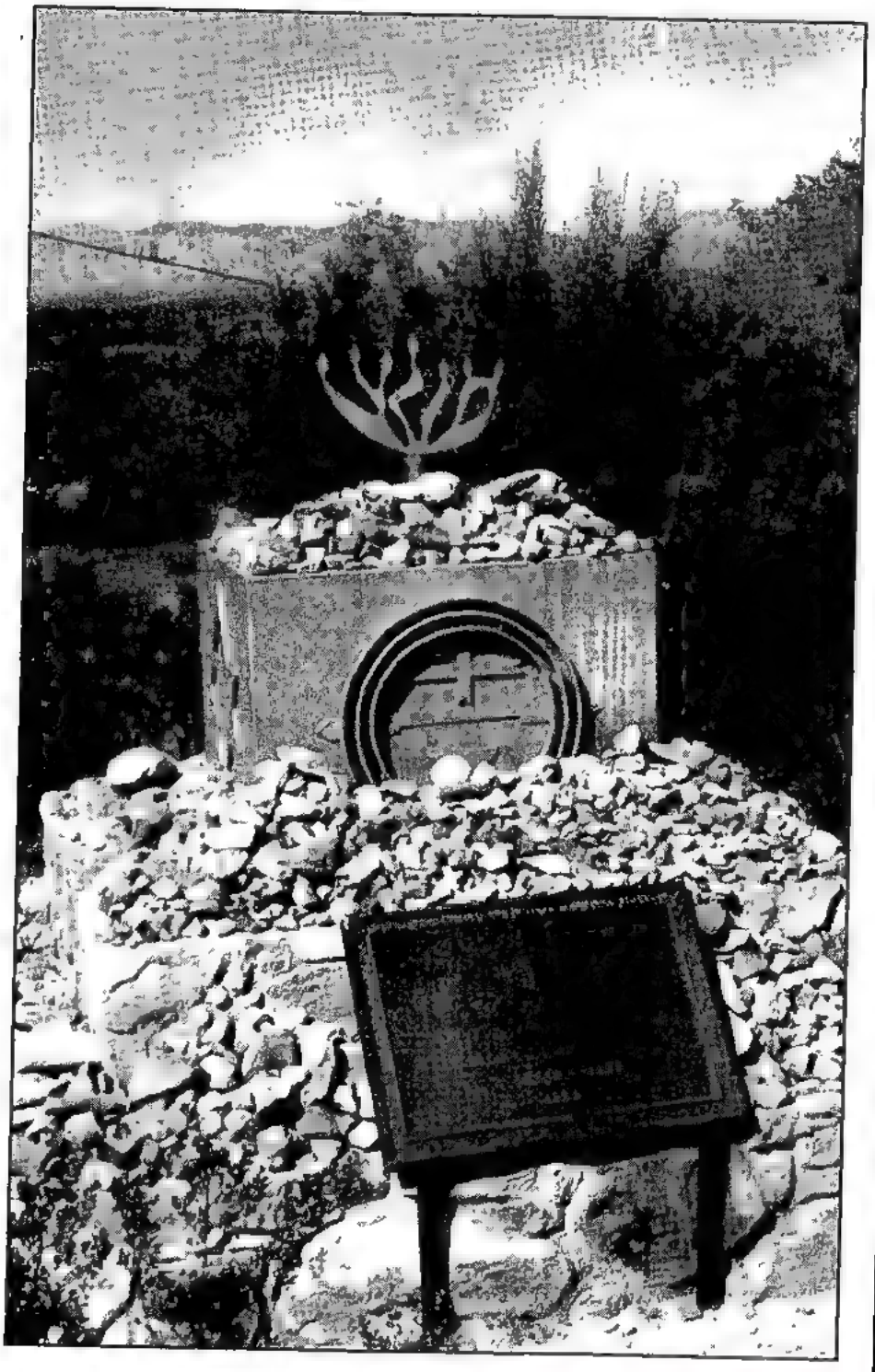
sands have visited the site, that an abandoned Jewish existed in the far northeast corner.



Author's Collection

A monument to Jewish pioneers and their Indian friends stands in a forgotten corner of Tombstone's Boothill.

IN THE APRIL ISSUE OF TRUE WEST:

SPECIAL DOC HOLLIDAY MINI-ISSUE!

Doc Holliday and the Whipit Gun. **By Rick Cartledge.** In the hands of a young southern dentist with nothing to lose, the suspended sawed-off shotgun was a powerful tool.

Doc Holliday's White Columns in Georgia. **By Victoria Wilcox.** The boyhood home of John Henry Holliday saw its share of family joy and tragedy.

True West Legends: Doc Holliday. **By Ben Traywick.** The life and times of the West's most famous dentist are highlighted.

PLUS

The Bloody Butcher of Laporte: Part II. **By Glenn Shirley.** With the law on her trail, murderess Belle Gunness goes out in a blaze of glory. Or does she?

Footnotes: Cattle Annie Found! **By Steve H. Bunch.** A western historian finds facts that support belief Cattle Annie lived to a ripe old age in Oklahoma.

The Vengeance of Bert Wilkinson. **By J.S. Peters.** The leader of an outlaw gang sacrifices one of his own for reward money, but at a deadly cost.

Lieutenant Patton's Raid. **By Douglas V. Meed.** An eager young army officer named George Patton launches a small raid against Pancho Villa.

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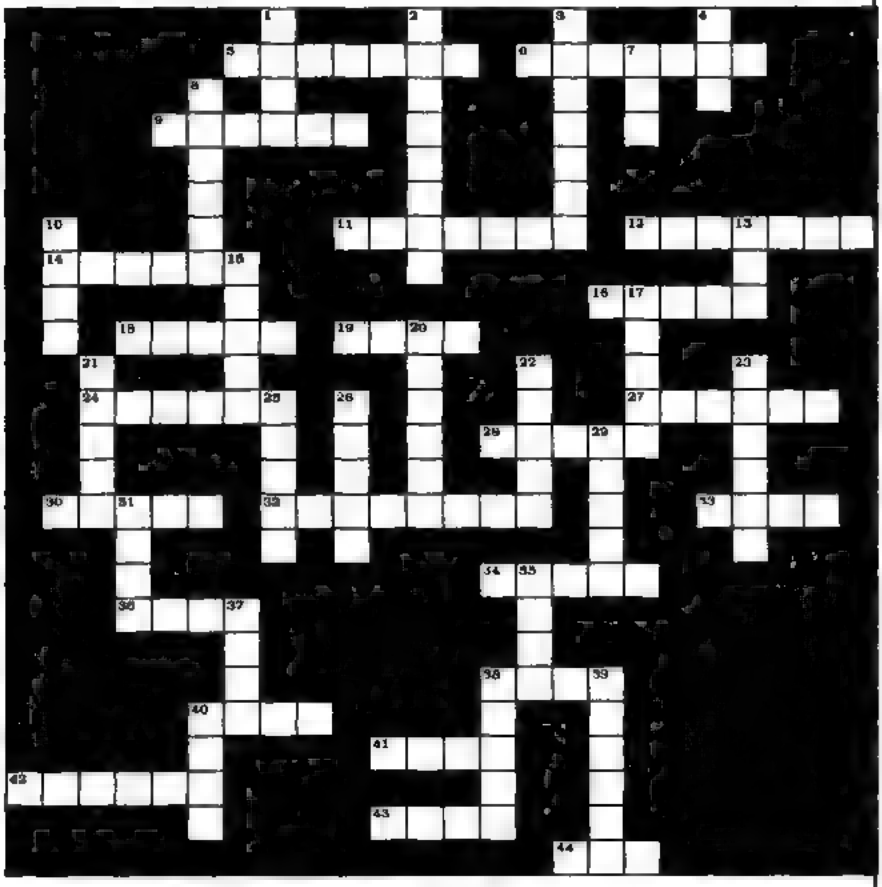


Across

5. ____ *Frontier Times*
6. stuffed Cajun sausage
9. ____ Corbet, shot J.W. Booth
11. cowboy raincoat
12. The Answer Man
14. don't call him "Duckbill"
16. outhouse
18. the land of cotton
19. school ___ (teacher)
24. thumbed back or fanned
27. Fannin massacre site
28. actor turned assassin
30. dried beefsteak
32. Butch's compadre
33. salad weed
34. Jesse's brother
36. Virgil, Morgan, or Wyatt
38. bought by the bucket or mug
40. frijole
41. brought folks to California
42. cracker, whiskey, or rain
43. holds faro deck
44. quilting or honey

Down

1. had to brush it off
2. fried pig meat
3. gunleather
4. rhubarb, gooseberry, or apple
7. Tabor's widow
8. best when fried green
10. Lash LaRue cracked it
13. Hickok's job in the Civil War
15. Bowie or Barlow
17. Roosevelt's Riders
20. group of reserve horses
21. color of blackpowder smoke
22. don't do this around Hardin
23. other Billy caught by Garrett
25. Robber's ____
26. need a still to make it
29. author from Hannibal
31. "dancin' at the end of a..."
35. Laura Ingalls' daughter
37. their knots made good torches
38. tin star
39. bad snake sound to hear
40. Curly ___ Brocious

Solution can be found in next month's True West.

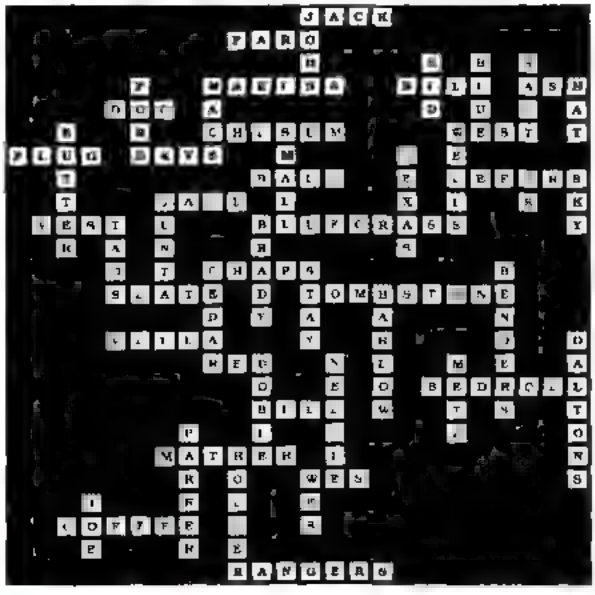
Jewish Friendship Club of Green Valley, Arizona, formed a non-profit corporation to carry out the work involved. They felt that it was important to recognize that there had been a Jewish community in Tombstone.

The site was cleaned, a wrought iron fence built to protect the remaining wall, and a simple monument erected to commemorate the Jewish pioneers who helped settle the West before 1900. The site was officially dedicated in February 1984. The monument, made of rock from local silver mines, stands on the site.

A business directory from Tombstone's heyday shows that Jews wore a variety of hats: miner, merchant, banker, grocer, gunsmith, and restaurant owner. A Jewish mine superintendent, Abraham Hyman Emanuel, even served as the town's mayor from 1896 to 1900. It is also said that Josephine Marcus Earp, Wyatt's third wife, was Jewish.

While the fascination with the gunfight at the OK Corral still grips the memory, the simple monument in the corner of Boothill recalls the Jewish pioneers who lived in Tombstone during those turbulent years.

February puzzle solution.



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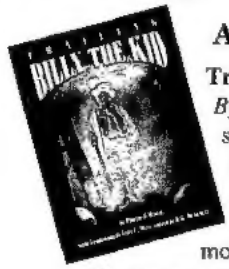

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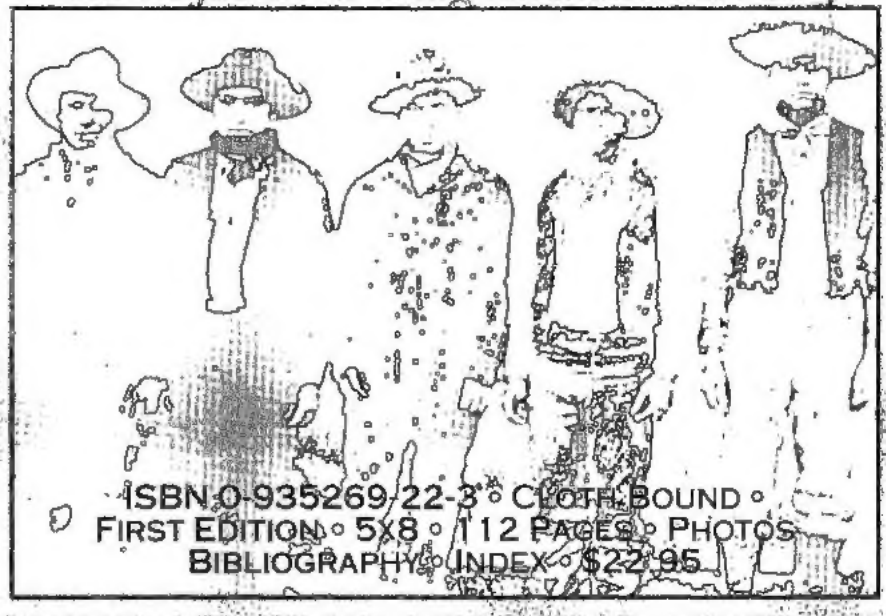

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